THE GOLD ELIXIR: THE CIRCULAR PATH OF THE TAO

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ABSTRACT

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A chance encounter with an 11th-century Chinese alchemical text in Jade East, a jewelry shop, was the beginning of a personal alchemical process. The alchemical process evolved through a hermeneutic interpretation of the text, Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). The 99 stanzas in Understanding Reality presents Chang Po-tuan's (983-1082) complete teachings of Complete Reality Taoism, a form of Taoism that developed during the Sung Dynasty (960-1279), the golden age of Chinese alchemy. This paper, a depth-psychological analysis of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process, focuses on the union of two opposites, yin and yang, or body and mind. A depth-psychological analysis approaches the alchemical symbols in the Taoist text through an amplification process that works to uncover the underlying archetypes, universal images.

A meeting of West, depth psychology, and East, Taoist alchemy, this paper continues a tradition that began with Jung's (1957/1967) first alchemical exploration, The Secret of the Golden Flower. However, Jung, in introducing Eastern thought to his Western readers, omits in-depth discussions of the

Chinese alchemical process and the Taoist cosmogony. This paper augments Jung's commentary by attending to the Taoist doctrines that define a cosmos that is the foundation of the Chinese alchemical goal, a Return to the Tao. One of the essential components of the Taoist cosmogony and the Chinese alchemical process is the vital energy ch'i. Although Jung was aware of ch'i, he did not associate its transformative actions with the Chinese meditative process.

In the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process, ch'i, like soul, is the mediator between body and mind, the transformative agent that brings consciousness to unconscious content, and the creator of psychic images. An exploration of the many wondrous qualities and characteristics of ch'i contributes to the general knowledge of the alchemical process and offers new perspectives to contemporary ideas of soul and the relationship between body, mind, and spirit. The actions of ch'i stand as a model for all of our thoughts and behaviors. In addition, the spiral paths and transformations of ch'i create a temenos, a sacred space that is a sine qua non for the therapeutic process.

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INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Preface

A Chinese Jewel

This depth-psychological study of a Chinese alchemical treatise, Understanding Reality, written by Chang Po-tuan (983-1082) nearly a thousand years ago, continues a tradition that began with Jung's (1957/1967) first study of alchemy, The Secret of the Golden Flower. His commentary established a relationship between Chinese alchemy and depth psychology that has been developed by Jungian analysts such as Odajnyk and Marlan. This preface, an account of my discovery of the text, will address the significance of depth-psychological studies of Chinese alchemy and look at the psychological and spiritual nature of alchemy. A literature review based on the relationship of depth psychology and Chinese alchemy will then introduce the fundamental doctrines of alchemy. A discussion of the methodology and organization of this study follows the literature review.

While shopping with my mother at Jade East, I noticed a rather nondescript paperback text on the jeweler's showcase. The cover depicted an ancient sage in meditation rendered in different tones of sepia and was not particularly attractive in its setting of multi-colored jade bangles and ancient jade artifacts. However, its title caught my attention, for it identified the text as "A

Taoist Alchemical Classic." While my mother looked for jade treasures, I scanned the text, but it seemed esoteric and completely foreign.

Although I am ethnically Chinese, I had considered Taoism an incomprehensible jumble of superstitions and in my ignorance confused Confucian and Buddhist beliefs with Taoist practices. Throughout my life, I have been repulsed by a number of Taoist rituals such as the one involving chicken sacrifice. However, at the time of my discovery of the text, I was undergoing my own analysis with a Jungian analyst and recalled his prodding to find my own mythology. I wondered whether this alchemical text would be my first conscious attempt to return to my roots and considered the possibility of an association between this text and Jung's findings about psyche (another interest of mine).

Prior to my encounter with Chang's (1987) text, as a student of depth psychology, I incorporated depth-psychological theories in a clinical practice that included dream analysis and Sandplay therapy. My knowledge of alchemy was limited to a class, Psychological Research and Design, that introduced me to the alchemical way of knowing and to von Franz's (1980) text, Alchemy. Because von Franz claims that alchemical documents arise from the collective unconscious, I considered whether the Chinese text would also provide insights about the Chinese equivalent of psyche and how unconscious content is brought to consciousness. Serendipitously, the jeweler encouraged me to take the text home with me.

A Spiritual Quest

Alchemy is a way of knowing and being that holds the opposites together. Examples of the two opposites are mind and matter, nature and spirit, and of course, the Chinese opposites, yin and yang. Romanyshyn (1997), in defining alchemy, explains how the early alchemists had been able to enter into a reality that they co-created through imaginal work. He explains that "alchemy is a way of thinking and being which installs one in the neither-nor domain. Within this domain, any absolute separation on inner and outer, of mind and matter, of consciousness and nature is dissolved" (p. 13). In this process unconscious material is transformed to consciousness just as the alchemists themselves are transformed. Romanyshyn's discussion brings to light the spiritual nature of the alchemical process.

The spirituality of alchemy is also evident in von Franz's (1980) discussion of alchemical experiences described by Olympiodorus and Zosimos. According to Jung (1954/1967b), Zosimus of Panopolis is "an important alchemist and Gnostic of the third century A.D." (p. 59) and Olympiodorus is a 5th-century alchemist who was a minister and official at the Byzantine Court. Von Franz links Olympiodorus' description of the alchemical task, "reassembling the light sparks of Adam and bringing him back to Paradise" (p. 93), to Zosimus' belief that Adam was created from the four elements and then fell from Paradise. According to Olympiodorus, the alchemical process restores Adam "who lives as a light spark in every human being" (p. 93). For von Franz, these references tell

us that the alchemical process is a "search for the incorruptible essence in man that could survive death, an essential part of the human being which could be preserved" (p. 93).

The spiritual nature of alchemy that von Franz (1980) presents addresses an age-old question: What is the purpose of life? As von Franz explains, God is a reality "who can speak in our psyche" (p. 139). Without proselytizing, she suggests that God also needs each person to individuate into the unique person that is already within oneself. Her work encapsulates a personal attraction to Jung's (1960/1969) study, Answer to Job, in which Jung proposes that God needs humankind's consciousness to become conscious. Indeed, God wants to become human. Humanity is therefore necessary for the uniting of this antimony and "involves man in a new responsibility" (p. 99). Becoming conscious is our divine reason for being. A study of the alchemical process may bring a deeper understanding of the process that will help us to meet such a responsibility.

Prior to my introduction to alchemy, I believed it to be the practice of medieval old men hidden away in dungeons and isolated huts who worked to transform lead into gold. Like Jung (1963/1989), I regarded alchemy as "something off the beaten path and rather silly" (p. 204). Although I knew that Jung eventually developed an intense interest in alchemy, it still appeared to me to be a mysterious and forbidding subject. I have since learned that Jung's interest in alchemical literature is based on documentation of a rich source of imagery that arises from the alchemists' quest for the gold present within

themselves. Jung came to realize that "alchemists were talking in symbols--those old acquaintances of mine" (p. 204). These symbols, according to Jung, are images of psyche and reflect the psychological nature of alchemy.

Although the imagery and symbolism of alchemy fascinated Jung, it left me perplexed. After reading Cleary's introduction to his translation of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) and a few of the verses, I soon realized that this text, although translated into English, uses a symbolic language that I had difficulty deciphering. I was intrigued by terminology such as "yellow sprouts," "green dragon," and "jade pond" and wanted to know what was below their surface meanings. I suspected that an understanding of this text would be a major undertaking. With my recently acquired awareness of Jung's alchemical studies and my interest in depth psychology, I turned to Jung's Collected Works, publications that span half a century of psychological studies, to help me bring meaning to Chang's verses. I found that Jung's study of Chinese alchemy is limited to The Secret of the Golden Flower (1957/1967) and references to Chinese alchemical terms that are dispersed through several texts in his Collected Works: Psychology and Alchemy (1944/1968); Alchemical Studies (1967); Mysterium Coniunctionis (1956-56/1970); and The Practice of Psychotherapy (1954/1966).

The following literature review is an extension of my exploration of Jung's Chinese alchemical studies. The literature review not only presents the publications of depth-psychological studies of Chinese and Western alchemy that are relevant to this study, but it also introduces the fundamental doctrines of

Taoism that developed into alchemical thought and practices and traces the development of Complete Reality Taoism, the school of Taoism promulgated in Understanding Reality. According to Cleary (Chang, 1987), Complete Reality Taoism is a school of Taoism that became a distinct movement between the 11th and 13th centuries and "was concerned with the totality of experience and with furthering human progress in the realms of both conventional and ultimate truth" (pp. xiii-xiv). Although Understanding Reality preceded The Secret of the Golden Flower, it was not translated at the time of Jung's foray into alchemy.

The Secret of the Golden Flower, the first alchemical text that Jung studied, is also the first Chinese alchemical text translated by a Westerner; Wilhelm (1962), a sinologist, translated the text into German. He traces the origins of his copy of The Secret of the Golden Flower to 17th-century wooden tablets. These tablets were discovered by the editor of Wilhelm's text, who describes having found "an incomplete copy dating from that time [the 17th century] in the Liu-li-ch'ang, the old street dealers in books and antiquities in Peking, and tells how he filled it out later from a friend's book" (p. 5). Wilhelm's Chinese copy is a 1920 printing of an 18th-century publication.

Wilhelm's (1962) translation of The Secret of the Golden Flower and Jung's commentary mark the beginning of a dialogue between scholars of Chinese alchemy and depth psychologists that continues to the present. Cleary (1991b) takes issue not only with Wilhelm's translation, but also with Jung's interpretations of Chinese meditative practice. Odajnyk (1993), one of Jung's

followers, carries on the dialogue in a critique of Cleary's interpretation of The Secret of the Golden Flower. This dialogue will be explored further in the final discussion of this literature review, since the variations in the interpretations of Jung, Cleary, and Ojadnyk are relevant to this analysis of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987).

The literature review will be presented before the full explication of the goal and purpose of this study because it lays the foundation for its thesis: Jung's (1957/1967) first study of Chinese alchemy, The Secret of the Golden Flower, is an introduction to the subject that will be enriched through a deeper understanding of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). Following the literature review, a thorough statement of the problem of this study will be presented. This discussion will be followed by a presentation of the methodology and organization of this study that are both based on a personal dream.

Literature Review

Introduction

This literature review includes three areas of alchemical studies that are relevant to this depth-psychological exploration of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). The areas are: (1) depth-psychological studies of Chinese alchemy; (2) depth-psychological studies of Western alchemy; and (3) studies of ancient Chinese texts that explain the origins and the structure of the Taoist cosmos and the world-view from which Chinese alchemy emerged. Knowledge

of the Taoist understanding of the cosmos is crucial to an accurate interpretation of Understanding Reality as the alchemical metaphors that Chang uses in his instructions are images that reflect the Taoist perspective of their cosmos. Despite the significance of the Taoist cosmogony to this study, this literature review begins with Jung's (1957/1967) study of Chinese alchemy, because the purpose of this paper is based on his commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower.

As we shall see, Jung was not the first scholar to recognize the psychological nature of alchemy, but he is the first psychologist to study Chinese alchemy. In addition to Jung's commentary and his references to Chinese thought, depth-psychological studies of Chinese alchemy include Moore's (1983a, 1983b) papers on the Tao and Odajnyk's (1993) study of meditation. Although not a study of Chinese alchemy per se, Moore's papers are included because she compares the Tao to Jung's findings on the Self and thus bring to light insights linking Chinese alchemy to modern depth psychology.

After Jung completed his study of The Secret of the Golden Flower, he turned to Western alchemical texts to further his research. In this review, Jung's studies of Western alchemy will be preceded by those completed by three of his followers, Schwartz-Salant, von Franz, and Edinger. The review of depth-psychological studies of alchemy begins with Schwartz-Salant because his text introduces readers to Jung's monumental alchemical works and sets the framework for the alchemical studies of von Franz and Edinger, which also assist

us through the labyrinths of alchemy. The alchemical studies of two other authors, Silberer, a psychologist associated with Freud, and Burckhardt, a scholar of Sufism, are also included in the literature review. Although they are not followers of Jung, their texts as well as the studies of Hitchcock and Eliade are included: these authors recognize the psychological nature of alchemy and contribute significant interpretations that can be used to bring a deeper understanding of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process presented in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987).

Although their studies of Western alchemy as well as depth-pyschological alchemical studies will contribute an important perspective to help amplify the symbols in Chang's (1987) text, Understanding Reality, it is necessary to emphasize the primacy of the Tao and its central importance to Chinese alchemy. A review of three ancient Taoist texts, the I Ching, the Tao-te ching, and the Chuang-tzu introduces the origins of Taoism and the development of spiritual alchemy. This section of the review is of the utmost importance because, as I shall claim, Jung's knowledge in this area was deficient and, therefore, so was his interpretation of The Secret of the Golden Flower as a whole. Although Jung later made major contributions to our understanding of the alchemical process, his first alchemical study was based on an incomplete copy of an alchemical treatise produced on wooden tablets in the 17th century, and his discussions of the Taoist cosmos are limited. The Taoist cosmogony is fundamental to the Chinese alchemical process, and its workings are the focus of the I Ching, the

Tao-te ching, and the Chuang-tzu, as well as three other texts reviewed here: the Pa'o-p'u tzu, the T'san t'ung ch'i, and the Huai-nan tzu. The three latter texts date from the Han dynasty and are also vital to this study, for they introduce the doctrines that are incorporated in Complete Reality Taoism, the form of Taoism propounded in Understanding Reality.

The literature review will introduce Complete Reality Taoism and present Chang's background and his contributions to alchemy. The introduction to Complete Reality Taoism precedes a discussion of two approaches to the study of Complete Reality Taoism: interpretations that reduce the Taoist metaphors to states of consciousness and depth-psychological interpretations that expand the meanings of the alchemical metaphors. The discussion of the differences between reductive and depth-psychological alchemical interpretations sets the stage for the concluding discussion of the literature review. The concluding discussion proposes that Cleary's translation of Understanding Reality is an appropriate vehicle for this depth-psychological study of Chinese alchemy.

Depth-psychological Studies of Chinese Alchemy

Studies of Chinese alchemy by depth psychologists are scarce. Although two other depth psychologists (Moore and Odajnyk) recognize the psychological nature of Taoist doctrines, this condition continues despite Jung's (1957/1967) encouragement for further study of the differences in Eastern and Western symbols. Nonetheless, studies by Jung, Moore, and Odajnyk not only contribute a Western psychological understanding of Chinese thought but can also be

employed in an analogical analysis of the symbols that Chang (1987) incorporates in his instructions about the Complete Reality Taoism process in Understanding Reality.

Jung's Studies of Chinese Alchemy

A search through Jung's Collected Works reveals that his studies of Chinese alchemy are limited to Wei Po-yang's Ts'ung t'ung ch'i and The Secret of the Golden Flower (Wilhelm, 1962) described as "A Chinese Book of Life." Although it is not possible to ascertain the extent of his study of this text, Jung (1955-56/1970) demonstrates a familiarity with the Ts'an t'ung ch'i for he notes that it is the "oldest Chinese text known to us (A. D. 142)" (p. 237). (The copy of the Ts'an t'ung ch'i that Jung refers to is a 1932 publication translated by Lu-ch'iang Wu). Jung's study of The Secret of the Golden Flower stands in sharp contrast to his published statements about the older text, the Ts'an t'ung ch'i. The author and date of publication of The Secret of the Golden Flower are unknown, and the text itself includes instructions for a meditative method that is an amalgam of Taoist, Buddhist, and Confucian teachings.

Initially, Jung did not recognize that The Secret of Golden Flower was an alchemical text, but its imagery reminded him of those in his own dreams and the dreams of his patients. Before receiving Wilhelm's manuscript in 1928, Jung's studies on psyche and psyche's images were limited to incomplete Gnostic texts. Gnosticism is a religion practiced by various cults of late pre-Christian and early

Christian times. The following is an account of Jung's (1963/1989) Gnostic studies:

> Between 1918 and 1926 I had seriously studied the Gnostic writers, for they too had been confronted with the primal world of the unconscious and had dealt with its contents, with images that are obviously contaminated with the world of instinct. Just how they understood these images remains difficult to say, in view of the paucity of the accounts--which, moreover, mostly stem from their opponents, the Church fathers. It seems to me highly unlikely that they had a psychological conception of them. (pp. 200-201)

For Jung, the Gnostic writings are too remote to apply to contemporary situations.

Jung (1963/1989) finds that "the tradition that might have connected Gnosis with the present seemed to have been severed, and for a long time it proved impossible to find any bridge that led from Gnosticism--or neo-Platonism--to the contemporary world" (p. 201). Jung credits Freud for rediscovering ancient myths such as that of Oedipus that incorporate Gnosis themes. According to Jung, "the Gnostic Yahweh and Creator-God reappeared in the Freudian myth of the primal father and the gloomy superego deriving from that of the father" (p. 201). Jung acknowledges Freud for this contribution but also takes issue with Freud for omitting an essential part of the Gnostic tradition, the krater, "a kind of uterus of spiritual renewal and rebirth" (p. 201).

Jung claims that in philosophical alchemy, "the feminine principle plays a role equal to that of the masculine" (p. 202).

The inconclusive results of Jung's study of Gnosticism stand in sharp contrast to his (1957/1967) exploration of the Chinese alchemical text, The Secret of the Golden Flower. The Taoist text gave him the "long-sought connecting link between Gnosis and the processes of the collective unconscious that can be observed in modern man" (p. 4). However, at the time of Jung's study of Chinese alchemy, he found that "alchemy is a most mistaken name; it had better be called the "Yoga Process" (1988, p. 445). Jung's initial conclusion is not surprising for at first glance, Wilhelm's (1962) translation of The Secret of the Golden Flower appears to be a manual on meditation. Instructions for the meditative process include sitting in the correct posture, focusing on the tip of the nose, and "making the breathing rhythmical" (p. 40). In addition, there are drawings portraying the different stages of meditation.

Jung (1957/1967) later corrects his mistake about the genre of The Secret of the Golden Flower in the foreword to the second German edition of Volume 13 of his Collected Works and states that "The Secret of the Golden Flower is not only a Taoist text concerned with Chinese yoga, but it is also an alchemical treatise" (p. 4). In addition to giving Jung (1963/1989) insights into immediate psychic experiences and a "light on the nature of alchemy" (p. 204), The Secret of the Golden Flower also generated a desire in Jung "to become more closely acquainted with the alchemical texts" (p. 204). After his study of Wilhelm's

translation of The Secret of the Golden Flower, Jung commissioned a bookseller to send him "the Artis Auriferae Volumina Duo (1593), a comprehensive collection of Latin treatises among which are a number of the 'classics' of alchemy" (p. 204). According to Jung (1957/1967), the study of the Latin treatises "has shown me that the alchemical character of the text [The Secret of the Golden Flower] is of prime significance" (p. 4). He reached this conclusion after amassing a lexicon of key phrases from the Latin texts with cross references: "I worked along philological lines, as if I were trying to solve the riddle of an unknown language. In this way the alchemical mode of expression gradually yielded up its meaning" (1963/1989, p. 205).

Although Jung's alchemical research took over a decade of intensive study, his understanding of the Chinese alchemical process is understandably limited, a condition reflected in his commentary on The Secret of the Goldern Flower, and his initial conclusion that it was a text on yoga. Under this impression, Jung (1957/1967) expresses concern that Westerners would attempt to imitate the Chinese practice of meditation without "the secret insights of the Oriental sages" (p. 37). Jung fears that in practicing yogic meditation, the Westerner "abandons the one sure foundation of the Western mind [science or reason] and loses himself in a mist of words and ideas that never would have originated in European brains, and which can never be profitably grafted upon them" (p. 7). Jung forthrightly states that the "meeting between the narrowly limited, but intensely clear, individual consciousness and the vast expanse of the

collective unconscious is dangerous" (p. 29) and thus devotes much space to describing the potential disintegration of consciousness. For Jung, the East was too disparate from the West and too difficult for a Westerner to fathom because Westerners lack knowledge of the unconscious and deny that autonomous psychic systems exist.

Because of Jung's (1957/1967) over-devotion to issues of meditation and the like, it can be claimed that his commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower provides only a brief introduction to Chinese alchemy and not the thorough study that it warrants. Jung expresses his own interest in the text as follows:

> The purpose of my commentary is to attempt to build a bridge of psychological understanding between East and West. The basis of every real understanding is man, and therefore I had to speak of human beings. This must be my excuse for having dealt only with general aspects, and for not having entered into technical details. (p. 55)

Jung's approach to The Secret of the Golden Flower was therefore a result of his psychological interest in the symbols of the East and the general aspects of Eastern thought rather than an interest in specific Chinese doctrines.

Further support for this conclusion can be found in his discussions concerning the Tao. Jung (1957/1967) demonstrates an understanding of the Tao and its relation to the pair of opposites, yin and yang but limits his discussion to a psychological definition of the Tao and alludes to its importance in his

discussion of "the circular movement and the centre" (p. 21). Overlooking the foundations of Taoist thought, Jung discusses the Tao through two of its symbols, the circle and the golden flower. As the following paragraph will show, Jung links these two symbols to fantasy material.

Jung (1957/1967) finds that the unconscious and life "lived with utter devotion" (p. 24) are the two that "together make the Tao" (p. 25), and that the two is the source of the fantasy material. He does not describe the process of the union of the two (the unconscious and life), how fantasy material arises from the unity, nor the importance of the Tao as the source of all existence. Instead, he appears to focus on one of his primary concerns, a psychological understanding of Chinese meditation. His psychological focus can be seen in his description of the Tao: Jung claims there is no Western equivalent for the Tao, but "if we take the Tao to be the method of the conscious way by which to unite what is separated, we have probably come close to the psychological meaning of the word" (p. 21). He continues his discussion:

> There can be no doubt, either, that the realization of the opposite hidden in the unconscious--the process of "reversal"--signifies reunion with the unconscious laws of our being, and the purpose of this reunion is the attainment of conscious life, or expressed in Chinese terms, the realization of the Tao. (p. 21)

Although Jung's description of the Tao is a psychological interpretation, it is similar to one of Henrick's (the translator of the Tao-te ching texts uncovered in

Ma-Wang-tui) definitions of the Tao. According to Henricks, "The Way is Lao-tzu's name for ultimate reality" (Lao-tzu, 1989, p. xviii). Henrick's interpretation of the Tao, ultimate reality, corresponds to Jung's conclusion about conscious life: both refer to a level of objective consciousness that is not confounded by the desires of the body and senses. This similarity indicates that Jung had an understanding of the goal of Taoist meditation despite the limited translations of Chinese texts available to him.

Although Jung has a psychological conception of the Tao, he is apparently not knowledgeable about the Taoist view of the cosmos as an examination of his later alchemical studies suggests. In his discussion of the creation of the opposites, Jung (1955-56/1970) cites the anonymous alchemical text De Sulphure, in which only three (fire, water, and air) of four elements participate in the creation of the two opposites. The fourth is earth which, "having nothing to work on, brought forth nothing" (p. 459). In this process, the classical alchemical triad is produced that then produces the "relationship of male to female as the supreme and essential opposition" (p. 458). In the Taoist process called the production of the Five Phases, Fire and Wood are combined, as are Water and Metal. With Earth in the center position, the Five Phases produce a triad. Both the Chinese and Western cosmogonies describe the production of a triad that occurs when there is a separation from the primordial state, and both describe a cosmic situation in which earth does not participate, yet Jung does not mention the Tao in his discussion of the creation of the opposites. This is notable because

Jung usually employs the literature, myths, comparative religions, and beliefs of many cultures in amplifying the images arising from psyche. In his discussion of the cosmos, Jung does not include Chinese thought to amplify the symbols that represent the creation of the two opposites.

This omission is repeated in his discussion of the Axiom of Maria. Jung (1944/1968) describes the Axiom of Maria as "one of the central axioms of alchemy, namely, the saying of Maria Prophetissa: 'One becomes two, two becomes three, and out of the third comes the one as the fourth'" (p. 23). Again, he does not investigate any similarities with the Taoist cosmos. The Taoist cosmogony, presented in Chapter 42 of the Tao-te ching (Lao-tzu, 1989), is as follows:

> The Way gave birth to the One;
>
> The One gave birth to the Two;
>
> The Two gave birth to the Three;
>
> And the Three gave birth to the ten thousand things. (p. 11)

Jung's omission of the Taoist cosmos in his discussion of the Axiom of Maria is notable because of the remarkable similarity between these two postulates. Jung had yet to begin his studies of Western alchemy when he wrote his commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower, and he may not have been aware of this similarity at that time, but his omission of the Taoist cosmos in his last major alchemical study supports the premise that Jung's knowledge of the Taoist

cosmos was rather limited. As the following review of Taoist texts will show, an understanding of the Tao is crucial to studies of Chinese alchemical texts.

Rather than an interest in the Tao, Jung (1957/1967) confirms that he was interested in the symbols of the East at the time of his first study of Chinese alchemy:

> It seemed to me important above all to emphasize the agreement between the psychic states and symbolisms of East and West. These analogies open a way to the inner chambers of the Eastern mind, a way that does not require the sacrifice of our own nature and does not confront us with the threat of being torn from our roots" (p. 55).

Jung is looking for similarities in the symbols of the East and not the details of the Chinese alchemical process.

Jung (1957/1967) therefore devotes much attention in his commentary on Eastern symbols of the union of opposites, especially the mandala. For Jung, mandalas have a special significance because he believes his own paintings of mandalas enabled him to break out of his self-imposed isolation that began with his break with Freud and led him to his discovery of the Self. Jung's use of the term "Self" for the whole psyche reflects his interest in Eastern symbols. Hannah (1976), one of Jung's followers, traces Jung's use of the term "Self" to the ancient Hindu religion and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that states, "This is thy Self, the ruler within, the immortal" (p. 47). Another Eastern influence is evident in Jung's use of mandala. According to Hannah, Jung "borrowed" (p. 126) mandala

from the Sanskrit term for a circular or square form that represents the totality of humans, the wholeness of the personality.

The influence of the East is prominent in Jung's (1957/1967) thinking even prior to his first study of Chinese alchemy, for he reveals that his second mandala painting had the form and colors that "seemed to me Chinese" (p. 197). He writes that "it was a strange coincidence that shortly afterward I received a letter from Richard Wilhelm enclosing the manuscript of a Taoist-alchemical treatise entitled The Secret of the Golden Flower, with a request that I write a commentary on it" (p. 197). For Jung, the receipt of Wilhelm's letter was significant to his own inner development:

> In 1929, he and I collaborated on The Secret of the Golden Flower. It was only after I had reached the central point in my thinking and in my researches, namely the concept of the self, that I once more found my way back into the world. (p. 208)

Jung is firm in his belief that his drawings of mandalas and his receipt of The Secret of the Golden Flower led to his discovery of the Self and his introduction to alchemy.

Therefore, it is not surprising that Jung (1957/1967) devotes much attention to mandalas in his commentary. He finds that mandalas are not only images of psychic development, but they also represent the golden flower and the Tao. As he states, "the golden flower is a mandala symbol I have often met with in the material brought me by my patients" (p. 23). Jung concludes that the

golden flower represents a unity when "consciousness and life (or human nature and life, hsing-ming) are still a 'unity, inseparably mixed like the sparks in the refining furnace'" (pp. 23-24). For Jung, the golden flower is analogous to a circle and represents the unity that is the Tao.

Jung (1957/1967) focuses on the psychological interpretation of the unity symbolized by the golden flower and the circle in his commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower. He finds that the circle represents the activation of "the light and dark forces of human nature, and together with them, all psychological opposites of whatever kind they may be" (p. 24). Although he introduces the significance of the circle as a symbol of wholeness that incorporates the movements of the Tao, his discussion misses the magnitude of the Taoist symbols. An example of such a Taoist symbol is one that is now familiar in the West, the T'ai-chi. This Taoist image depicts the unity of the two opposites, yin and yang, the circular alternations of the movements of the opposites, and the movement of the unity:

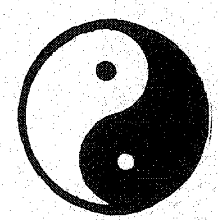


Figure 1. The T'ai-chi

Figure 1, a mandala, illustrates a central precept of Taoism, the dynamism of the energies yin and yang.

For Jung (1957/1967), the activation represented by the circle's movement "is nothing less than self-knowledge" (p. 25). Jung's psychological interpretation of the circulation that brings self-knowledge is a circular movement around oneself "so that all sides of the personality become involved" (p. 25) including those parts of the personality that have been repressed. Maintaining his psychological focus, Jung concludes that self-knowledge leads to a superior personality. He explains that the superior personality "symbolizes an attitude that is beyond the reach of emotional entanglements and violent shocks--a consciousness detached from the world" (p. 46).

Jung's statements about a detached consciousness are similar to the definition of the Complete Reality Taoism goal provided by Cleary (Chang, 1987) in his introduction to Understanding Reality. For Cleary, the Complete Reality Taoism practitioner works to stabilize consciousness by maintaining "contact with the higher, vaster dimension of 'celestial' consciousness while at the same time living effectively in the 'earthly' domain" (p. 3). Cleary's interpretation of the Complete Reality Taoism goal of "stabilizing consciousness" (Chang, 1987, p. 17) is similar to Jung's definition of the superior personality, as the Taoist also attempts to live "beyond the bounds of ordinary thought and emotion" (p. 3).

One notable difference between Jung's (1957/1967) commentary and Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) is found in Jung's psychological

explanation of the alchemical goal. His discussion alludes to the need for the alchemical process, whereas the verses in Understanding Reality repeatedly address the need through rich symbols and metaphors. However, a parallel can be found in Cleary's (Chang, 1987) summary of the necessity for the alchemical process, the conditioned state in Complete Reality Taoism and a psychological state in which the ego is in control. According to Cleary, the alchemical process becomes necessary when humans have been "conditioned by personal and collective history" (p. 12) and function in a state of conditioned consciousness. Psychologically, a conditioned consciousness is a consciousness where the ego considers itself to be the center that controls psychic functions. This is an unstable state of consciousness where emotions interfere with reality.

Another similarity between Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) and The Secret of the Golden Flower is their amalgamation of three eastern religions: Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Jung, however, finds it useful to comprehend Chinese alchemy through a separate religion, Christianity, as he finds that Christian concepts influenced Western alchemists. The following quotation, in which Jung concludes that the final aim of Chinese alchemy is similar to the Western alchemical goal, demonstrates this tendency. For Jung (1938/1969), the search for the gold or the "elixir vitae" of Western alchemy is the search for the

> divine hermaphroditus, the second Adam, the glorified, incorruptible body of resurrection, or the lumen luminum, the illumination of the

> human mind, or sapientia. . . Chinese alchemy produced the same idea, that the goal of the opus magnum is the creation of the "diamond body." (p. 111)

The diamond body (or chen jen, true man) corresponds "to the corpus incorruptibile of medieval alchemy, which is identical with the corpus glorificationis of Christian tradition, the incorruptible body of resurrection" (1950/1969, p. 358). Citing Wei, Jung (1955-56/1970), compares the notion of chen jen to the Anthropos that, according to Jung (1954/1966), is "an 'eternal' idea, an archetype that can appear spontaneously at any time and in any place" (p. 217). Jung concludes that its revelation "is much the same thing as the vision of Christ for the believing Christian" (p. 217).

Although the conceptions of the unification of the body and divine spirit are similar in Western and Chinese alchemy, Jung still claims that for Western alchemists, the inability to fully integrate the unconscious with the conscious may lead to certain dissociative states. Jung's (1954/1967a) concern is based on his conclusion that Western alchemists had to deal with the ideal of the imitatio Christi that led the alchemist to feel "morally obliged to realize the demands of the self regardless of whether these demands taxed him too highly" (p. 325). In contrast, Jung finds that the Chinese approach the integration of unconscious material with more depth and that Chinese alchemy "mitigates the disintegrating

effect of the unconscious by describing the thought-figures as 'empty colours and forms'" (1957/1967, p. 29).

The Chinese strength in integration can be attributed to their deep-rooted Taoist tradition. Jung (1952/1960) addresses Chuang-tzu's idea of the pivot of the Tao, and posits that "the Taoist view is typical of Chinese thinking. It is, whenever possible, a thinking in terms of the whole" (p. 489). Jung concludes that the Tao is a conception in which the opposites are reconciled and that it, like alchemical knowledge, is "universal" (p. 490).

Although Western approaches seem to lack the wholeness that is inherent in Chinese thought, Jung (1921/1971), through his limited understanding of the Taoist cosmos, speaks of each person's importance, as a microcosm, in the reconciliation of the opposites in both Christianity and Taoism. For Jung, the result of the effort to become one with the Tao, "a state of infancy" (p. 216), demonstrates the redeeming effect of the Tao. This is an "essential condition of obtaining the kingdom of heaven and . . . is the central, irrational symbol whence the redeeming effect comes" (p. 216). In his conclusion, Jung again finds an association between Christianity and Chinese thought: the return to the Tao is similar to the Christian goal of ascending to the kingdom of heaven.

This review of Jung's studies of Chinese alchemy reveals that Jung was more interested in the similarities and differences between Eastern and Western thought as represented in their respective symbolism rather Taoist doctrines. This review also finds that Jung relies on his familiarity and knowledge of

Christianity to help him with interpretations. Although his commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower lacks a comprehensive understanding of the Taoist cosmogony, it is important to note that Jung's later alchemical studies contribute significantly to this analysis of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). Jung's psychological interpretations of alchemy provide analogies play an essential role in uncovering the meanings of Chang's enigmatic metaphors.

Recognized for his significant contributions to the study of alchemy by such respected scholars as Eliade and Needham, Jung evidently believes that Chinese and Western alchemy share a parallel development and he devoted his energies to a decade-long study of Western alchemy. However, Needham (1980), who produced a comprehensive study of Chinese science and civilization, disputes a parallel development, arguing that Chinese alchemy developed a century and a half before the Western. Moreover, Western alchemy is rooted in Chinese alchemy, a knowledge that spread to the West through the Old Silk Road. Needham reaches this conclusion through an analysis of ancient alchemical texts of Egypt, Greece, and Arabia, the European evolution of proto-Chemistry, and an analysis of the etymology of alchemy. Needham presents his extensive research about the beginnings of Chinese alchemy in his opus, Science and Civilization in China. Despite this disagreement about the origins of alchemy, both Chinese and Western alchemy have endured through millennia and both are believed to reveal universal knowledge. As this literature review finds, alchemical images are also psyche's images and are therefore universal.

Moore

Since Jung's death, no depth psychologist has completed a study that focuses solely on Chinese alchemy. However, Moore (1983a) provides a paper (in two parts) on Taoism based on Jung's psychological theories. She focuses on several symbols of the Tao-te ching and describes the Way "as actualisation of archetypal potential by incarnation in the body" (p. 138). Moore (1983b) also discusses the Tao as the "paradigm of human development" (p. 250) and relates the Tao to individuation. Although Moore's papers cannot be considered a study of alchemy, her association of the Tao to individuation is relevant to this analysis of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987).

Individuation "is the general term that Jung gave to the process of getting to know the totality of the psyche, and to yielding the central place to the 'Self' instead of usurping it with the ego" (Hannah, 1976, p. 130). Jung (1955-56/1970) explains how the goal of the individuation process is also an alchemical process:

> We can see today the entire alchemical procedure for uniting the opposites . . . could just as well represent the individuation process of a single individual, though with the not unimportant difference that no single individual ever attains to the richness and scope of the alchemical symbolism. (p. 555)

Individuation and alchemy are both processes that unite human consciousness with the unconscious. Moore's study identifies the Tao as the point of origin of consciousness and "the goal to which it tends" (p. 125). Moore also concludes

that the "returning path" is a path to wholeness. Her paper reinforces the similarities between the Tao and the Self as archetypes of wholeness.

Odajnyk

In her study, Moore focuses on the Tao, whereas Odajnyk addresses the metaphor of light. Light is a symbol that links his work, Gathering the Light: A Psychology of Meditation, to Chinese alchemy: the goal of The Secret to the Golden Flower is to turn the light around. In his study, Odajnyk evidently has Jung's commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower in mind when he contends that Jung's psychological theories are only "mentioned in a peripheral way in the most recent studies of meditation and altered states of consciousness" (p. 9). As a remedy to this oversight, Odajnyk cites Jung's significant contributions to the current interest in Eastern thought and meditative practices and highlights Jung's major role in introducing and interpreting Eastern religious thought to the West.

Odajnyk (1993) notes that one of his goals is the application of "the insights and discoveries of Jungian psychology to meditation" (p. 9). To this end, Odajnyk traces Jung's interest in the East beginning with his initial study of Chinese alchemy. Odajnyk cites Jung's introduction to the I Ching but finds that Jung was also interested in other Eastern religions. During the 1930's, Jung wrote commentaries to The Tibetan Book of the Dead, The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation, a foreword on Zen Buddhism, and an essay on tantra yoga. According to Odajnyk, Jung then "turned his attention almost exclusively to

alchemy" (p. 17). Presumably, he meant Western alchemy. Although Odajnyk does not provide specific details, Jung's later alchemical studies are most likely influenced by the availability of Western alchemical texts and the lack of translated Taoist alchemical texts. In spite of his concentration on Western alchemy, Jung continued to "voice his opposition to an uncritical admiration and acceptance of Eastern modes of mediation on the parts of Westerners" (p. 18).

Following in the footsteps of Jung, Odajnyk (1993) incorporates other Eastern religions into his own study of meditation:

> The Eastern religious goal, like that of most religions, is to reunite us with our original nature, from which we have become estranged. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, that estrangement is the consequence of the Fall. In the East, it is associated with the development of the ego. The idea is that the ego stands in the way of our return to the original egoless state of mind, which is seen as a more whole, complete, and true state of consciousness than that of the ego. (p. 65)

For Odajnyk, the Eastern goal is not the destruction of the ego but "a breakthrough to an insight into our original nature as mature adults and to integrate that insight in our conception of ourselves and our world. This cannot be accomplished without an ego" (p. 65). The ego is a necessary component in meditation.

Odajnyk (1993) asserts, as does Jung, that alchemical imagery is a representation of the individuation process but it is "also a phenomenological

experience" (p. 163). He thus uses alchemical imagery to support his theory of the meditation complex:

> The union of the soul with spirit has to do with the union of the psychic energy that was withdrawn from the body, emotions, and thoughts with the energy of empty or suspended consciousness. This union of the two energies does not establish conscious and rational insight immune from the influences of the body, but creates a new psychological energetic field, the meditation complex. (p. 159)

Odajnyk concludes that the creation of the meditation complex allows the union of the opposites to become a permanent part of an individual's personality "that are the ultimate goal of meditation, both in the East and West" (p. 166).

Odajnyk (1993) also takes a substantive look at the alchemical process and finds parallels with Jung's studies of the coniunctio and Eastern meditation practices including The Secret of the Golden Flower, "Hinduism, yoga, Zen, vipassana meditation, and Tibetan Buddhism" (p. 168). Odajnyk contends that the aims of major Eastern religions and the aims of psychoanalysis are the same: "to foster consciousness as a means of alleviating suffering" (p. 170). His study of meditation exemplifies his attempt to "pursue personal development through psychoanalysis or psychotherapy combined with Eastern meditation" (169). For Odajnyk, "psychotherapy is the appropriate Western method for the expansion of consciousness: it takes into account both our personal and cultural characteristics and is based on an empirical and scientific study of human

psychology" (p. 117). Odajnyk suggests that meditation can be combined with psychotherapy, a meeting of East and West. Although Odajnyk states that he is not as "uncompromising" as Jung was in his concerns about Westerners practicing Eastern spiritual beliefs, his study offers an alternative, a psychological approach to Eastern spiritual practices.

In his appendix, "Cleary, Jung, and The Secret of the Golden Flower," Odajnyk (1993) draws conclusions that are relevant to the purpose of this study, the enrichment of Jung's commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower. First, Odajnyk asserts that Cleary's translation of this text is "eminently more readable, but not always more comprehensible and in some instances, it seems to me, not necessarily better than the Wilhelm-Baynes edition" (p. 192). (Baynes is the English translator of Wilhelm's work). In his above conclusion, Odajnyk argues that Cleary's translation is not an improvement, even though Wilhelm's translation is based on an incomplete version of the Chinese text. Second, Odajnyk acknowledges that Cleary (1991b) is correct in criticizing Jung's commentary. As he states, this alchemical text was Jung's first "serious encounter with Eastern thought, and his knowledge was indeed limited at that time" (p. 198). Third, Odajnyk agrees with Cleary that "Jung tried to make sense of the book in his own terms and used its concepts as confirmations or illustrations of his psychological discoveries and ideas--the concept of the Self, for example, or the notions of animus and anima" (p. 198). (In this statement, Odajnyk is referring to Jung's use of anima as the feminine soul of a male, and the animus as

the female counterpart). Although Odajnyk claims that Cleary has a similar intent, to make sense of the alchemical text so that it would be a practical guide for Westerners, he insists that Cleary's purpose influences his interpretation and explanations. Like other Western writers, Cleary interprets Chinese alchemy to substantiate his own interests.

This review of Odajnyk's study, as well as the studies of Jung and Moore, finds that each of these authors has a desire to help Westerners understand Eastern thought. Yet, the above writers did not approach their studies with the goal of bringing meaning to the alchemical symbols by melding the doctrines of the Taoist cosmogony with depth-psychological perspectives. This study, however, will integrate alchemical interpretations by depth psychologists with interpretations by Taoist scholars in order to find the meanings of the alchemical imagery arising from the metaphors in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). For this reason, depth-psychological studies of alchemy are crucial to this analysis and will be reviewed in the following section.

Depth-psychological Studies of Western Alchemy

The above review of depth-psychological studies of Chinese alchemy has underscored the limited information on Chinese internal alchemy from a depth-psychological perspective. However, Jung and his followers, Schwartz-Salant, von Franz, and Edinger, have completed numerous depth-psychological studies of Western alchemy that are important to this paper. Their studies are a rich source of analogies that will be used in an analytic technique to find the

meanings of the alchemical symbols in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). This analytic technique is based on Jung's (1954/1966) approach to dream analysis where he finds as many associations as possible. In his words, Jung uses

> primitive psychology, mythology, archaeology, and comparative religion, because these fields offer me invaluable analogies with which I can enrich the associations of my patients. Together, we can then find meaning in apparent irrelevancies and thus vastly increase the effectiveness of the dream. (p. 45)

Jung explored many associations in order to find the meaning of the dream. This technique can used in this study of Chang's (1987) symbols because, according to von Franz (1980), alchemical symbols are images that arise from the collective unconscious. The analytic technique that Jung applies to dream symbols will help to find the meanings of the Chinese alchemical symbols that will, in turn, bring a deeper understanding to Understanding Reality. Other scholars of alchemy who are not followers of Jung, Hitchcock, Eliade, and Burckhardt, are reviewed because their interpretations include a depth-psychological perspective and are another source of analogies that will be used to bring meaning to Chang's alchemical symbols. The alchemical studies of Hitchcock and Silberer preceded those of Jung.

Hitchcock

Although Hitchcock is not a psychologist and his pamphlets are not easily accessible to the public, he is included here as an acknowledgement of his place

as the first Western writer in the modern era who recognizes the psychological nature of alchemy. At the time of Jung's first alchemical investigation, Silberer (1914/1971), a disciple of Freud, had completed his work, Hidden Symbolism of Alchemy and the Occult Art. However, not only Silberer, but Needham (1983) and Eliade (1956/1962) also claim that Hitchcock had recognized the psychological nature of alchemy before Silberer. Silberer himself credits Hitchcock for rediscovering "the intrinsic value of alchemy over and above its chemical and physical plane" (p. 153). Needham, in exploring the origins of Chinese alchemy, notes that Hitchcock found that the alchemical symbols concealed "distinctively moral and ethical teachings, and [he] believed that the medieval alchemists had resorted to concealment because they feared persecution for heretical ideas" (p. 15).

Needham (1983) also credits Hitchcock for his early work on alchemy and notes that Jung "never mentions Hitchcock" (p. 15). A search through Jung's texts verifies this. According to Needham, Hitchcock was a Major General in the United States Army who, in the mid-19th century, took trunkloads of ancient books with him on his duty assignments across the American frontier. Hitchcock produced two works on alchemy in 1855 and 1857 that Silberer refers to as pamphlets but that Needham describes as "two memorable books" (p. 15). According to Needham, Hitchcock "propounded the idea that the real subject of alchemy had been the improvement of man himself" (p. 15). Hitchcock reveals

his awareness of the spiritual nature of alchemy in the following quotation: "Aurum nostrum non est aurum vulgi, 'our gold is not ordinary gold'" (p. 15).

Silberer

Although Hitchcock's writings are not easily available, Silberer's (1914/1971) text is. Eliade (1956/1962) considers Silberer's work the "only really serious book on the subject in which alchemy was tackled from the viewpoint of depth psychology" (p. 222) prior to Jung's work. Silberer applies a psychoanalytic interpretation to an alchemical tract, Guldenen tractat vom philosophischen Stein that was written in 1625. Schwartz-Salant (1995) suggests that this text was from "late alchemy and very difficult to decipher" (p. 22). Schwartz-Salant is apparently referring to the difference between early alchemical texts that the Arabs translated from Greek and later Latin translations. According to von Franz (1980), the Arabs were "very faithful translators and added very little, they simply translated Greek into Arabic" (p. 41). The Latin translators, however, were influenced by Christian doctrine and "were only partly successful in the attempt" (p. 43). For von Franz (1979), Western alchemy "got distilled into the Christian consciousness of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and lost its basis as a genuine experience" (p. 25). Jung (1963/1989) notes that Silberer "had used in the main late material, which I could make nothing of. The late alchemical texts are fantastic and baroque; only after we have learned how to interpret them can we recognize what treasures they hide" (p. 204).

Jung (1963/1989) is aware of Silberer's alchemical studies for he acknowledges Silberer (1914/1971) for his "anagogic or constructive view" (p. 204) but claims that Silberer does not provide a comprehensive study of the ideas contained in his text. However, Jung (1955-56/1970) does credit Silberer for his recognition of the symbolic nature of alchemy and the "coniunctio [the union of opposites] as the 'central idea' of the alchemical procedure" (p. 457). Silberer reaches his conclusions by approaching the 17th alchemical text as a parable and noting recurrent motifs with which he finds parallels in fairy tales and mythology. Ultimately, Silberer relates this work to Rosicrucianism, a form of religious mysticism that arose in the 15th century.

Silberer's (1914/1971) alchemical study provides another Western perspective for this study of Chinese alchemy. Of relevance are two motifs: the relationship between the macrocosm and microcosm, and the unity of three which are also themes in Chinese alchemy. The two themes are found in Silberer's discussion about the philosopher's stone (the alchemical goal). He finds that the philosopher's stone "is therefore the world in little, the microcosm, man: one, a unity, three, mercury, sulphur, salt, or spirit, soul, or body" (p. 154). In addition, Silberer notes that "'our stone consists of a body, a soul, and a spirit'" (p. 162), a triad. The relationship between the microcosm and macrocosm is a tri-partite relationship, a relationship between the one and the three. This theme reappears in Burckhardt's following discussion of a tri-partite cosmogony as well as in a later discussion of the cosmogony of the Tao-te ching.

Burckhardt

Burckhardt's (1960/1967) study of alchemy is a rich resource for this analysis of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). Although Schwartz-Salant (1995), one of Jung's followers, finds that Burckhardt's writings are influenced by an attitude that alchemy is "a divine, spiritually illuminated science" (p. 11), Burckhardt's perspective is in agreement with several of the teachings of Complete Reality Taoism. Perhaps the most obvious similarity is Burckhardt's view that humankind "is the privileged bearer of the Intellect" (p. 52) and the Complete Reality Taoism notion that celestial knowledge is innate in humans. According to Burckhardt, humans, as bearers of Divine Intellect, have a responsibility "to presage and contemplate the realities immutably contained in the Divine Intellect" (p. 55). Complete Reality Taoism also propounds that humans have a responsibility to recreate the primal state through an awareness of celestial knowledge, an in-born, immediate knowing.

Another similarity is Burckhardt's (1960/1971) description of a descending movement from the "all-embracing Divine Intellect" (p. 46) where "each degree of existence proceeds from a higher one, in such a way that the higher degree 'contains' the lower one, just as cause 'contains' its effect" (p. 46). The descent is one part of a dual movement whereas the return, described by Burckhardt as the return to the Divine Intellect, is the second part. For Burckhardt, the return is an ascent "through a hierarchy of spiritual (or intellectual) degrees, by means of which the soul, which successively realizes

these, gradually turns from a discursive knowledge bound to forms to an undifferentiated and immediate vision in which subject and object, knower and known, are one" (p. 47). Likewise, in Complete Reality Taoism, humans are seen to degenerate from an "original 'celestial state'" (Chang, 1987, p. 11), a downward movement that is reversed by "channeling vitality and energy 'upward' to boost consciousness" (Chang, 1987, p. 11). The Taoist analog of Burckhardt's ascent, the return to the Divine Intellect is also a return, an upward movement that is a return to the Tao, the alchemical goal. As we shall see, the Taoist alchemical goal is an experience wherein "all sense of self and other, of heaven and earth has vanished" (Blofeld, 1978, p. 153). The return to the Tao, as is the return of the soul, is a union of the macrocosm and microcosm.

The relationship between the macrocosm and the microcosm and the tri-partite cosmos are themes found in several alchemical texts. In his study, Burckhardt (1960/1967) uses the threefold unity described by Ruysbroek, a Dutch mystic who lived in the 14th century, to explain the relationship of the macrocosm (the universe) and the microcosm (humans). The trinity is a unity with God; unity with the higher faculties or spirit; and unity with the lower faculties or soul. This tri-unity explains how there is a part of the macrocosm in each person, the microcosm, just as each person is a part of the universe. The unity with God, is "the foundation and support of our life" (p. 71). The unity with the spirit is "above the realm of the senses. From it derive thought, reason, will and all the possibilities of spiritual activity" (p. 71). The unity with soul is in

the body "for it is the 'form' of the body which it animates, the body which it makes to live and keep alive" (p. 71). The theme of Rusybroek's tri-unity is noted here as it will be used as analogies throughout this study.

The theme of triads is but one of the many parallels between Burckhardt's findings and Complete Reality Taoism teachings. Three other parallels are identified above: the notion of a Divine Intellect that corresponds with celestial knowledge in Complete Reality Taoism; the ascending and descending movements of the soul and the Taoist view of the human (degenerated) state and the need to return to the Tao; and the tri-partite cosmos. These similarities are based on a cosmological vision that is reflected in the alchemical process, an alchemical transmutation that "brings the centre of human consciousness into direct contact with that divine ray which irresistibly attracts the soul upwards and lets it savour by anticipation the Kingdom of Heaven" (p. 73). Burckhardt's conclusion not only emphasizes the spiritual nature of alchemy, it also identifies the importance of the human ego in the alchemical process.

These parallels between Chinese and Western alchemy should not be surprising for, as Burckhardt (1960/1971) notes, "the model for the alchemical work is nature" (p. 115). As we shall see, Taoism is itself founded on the observations of nature. Burckhardt's position that nature is a "unitary power or cause whose essence may be known by perceiving its all-embracing rhythm--a rhythm which rules both the outward and inward world" (p. 115) might well be a description of the Tao. Although Burckhardt recognizes that the cosmic power

of nature is cyclic and is thus symbolized by the circle, his discussions of the model or structure of nature are not as comprehensive as the Taoist doctrines of the cosmos. Like Jung, he did not have available knowledge of the Taoist cosmogony and one of its most significant symbols, the T'ai-chi. His text, however, is rich in alchemical symbolism and will serve as a significant resource for this study.

Eliade

Eliade (1956/1962) claims that Chinese alchemy is "an autonomous discipline" (p. 112) that utilizes traditional cosmological principles, yet he is another scholar of Chinese alchemy who does not incorporate the Taoist cosmology in his writings. He does, however, note the importance of the cosmos in his discussion of the relationship between the macrocosm and microcosm. For Eliade, the fantasies that the early alchemists projected on their alchemical ingredients is an imaginary world (univers imaginaire) that "came into being through the discovery of metals" (p. 181). Eliade is referring to the analogy between metals and humans that is also the foundation of the unity of the macrocosm and the microcosm. Early alchemists believed that metals were living organisms and because metals could be transmuted into gold, so could humans.

As Eliade (1956/1962) states, he does not want to negate the importance of the early alchemists' contributions to the "discovery of metals and the progress of mining and metallurgical practices" (p. 181). However, as important as their

experiments with metals are, their experiences of the imaginary world developed "a new mythological and religious universe" (p. 181) that "radically modified the human mode of being in the universe" (p. 181). Eliade's study of alchemy highlights the significant contribution that alchemy has made to the consciousness of human beings. His study not only emphasizes the imaginary nature of the alchemical process but also highlights the significance of metals in analogical thought and the role of analogical thought in alchemy: because humans, the microcosm, are analogous to metals, the macrocosm, they can also be purified through a refining process.

Thus far, this review of Western alchemical studies identifies several parallels between Western alchemy and Complete Reality Taoism that reflect the affinity between the two forms of alchemy. Although Hitchcock is identified as the first Westerner to recognize that the alchemical process works to improve humanity, Burckhardt, Eliade, and Silberer also acknowledge both the spiritual aspects of alchemy and alchemy's contributions to human development. In the following review of alchemical studies completed by Jung and his followers, alchemy's other contributions as well as further parallels with Complete Reality Taoism will be identified.

Alchemical Studies by Jung and His Followers

One of the themes that the prior review of depth-psychological studies of Chinese alchemy and Western alchemy emphasizes is the role of consciousness in the alchemical process. In the following review of studies by Jung and his

followers, this theme is further developed. Another motif that reappears is the coniunctio, the union of opposites that is also central to the Chinese alchemical process that unites the opposites frequently referred to as yin and yang. The following review will address other elements of the Western alchemical process that have parallels with the Complete Reality Taoism process, including the theme of triads, the tri-partite cosmos, and the three-stage alchemical process. Although these are significant components of the Taoist cosmogony, Jung (1957/1967) omits discussions of these elements in his commentary. Other important parallels that Jung does not address are the similarity between the vital energy, ch'i, and soul, the different levels of consciousness, and the theme of separation that is followed by a reintegration. These correspondences are significant to this analysis of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987).

Schwartz-Salant

The alchemical studies of Schwartz-Salant (1995) are presented first because he highlights selections from Jung's alchemical studies in order to introduce them in a way that will prevent the reader from getting lost in "the hundreds of pages of commentary on alchemy that he [Jung] wrote" (p. 25). Schwartz-Salant commends "Jung's special achievements, namely his awareness of the central feature of the coniunctio (the union of opposites), the Attis-Cybelle myth as related to the prima materia, "a much prized and often obscure basic substance" (p. 25), and "his remarkable ability to decipher a goal-oriented process amidst the all but unintelligible maze of alchemical texts" (p. 39). The last of the

above three areas is self-explanatory, whereas the former two require some explanation.

The coniunctio, because it describes the union of opposites, is considered the "central idea" (Jung, 1955-56/1970, p. 457) of alchemy, and Jung selects it as the title of his magnus opus, the Mysterium Coniunctionis. The coniunctio is not only the focus of Jung's major study of alchemy, but also one of the alchemical processes that is frequently studied and referred to by alchemical scholars. As Edinger (1995) explains in The Mysterium Lectures, the coniunctio as described by Dorn unites the two opposites, consciousness and the unconscious in three stages. The first stage splits the unio naturalis (original condition) and creates the unio mentalis (mental union). In this stage, soul separates from the body and unites with spirit, thus, the unio mentalis. In the second stage the unio mentalis is reunited with the body; and in the third stage, there is a union of the now united body, soul, and spirit, with the unus mundus (one world). Dorn was an early 17th-century alchemist who "edited twenty-six of Paracelsus' (a 16th century physician and alchemist) treatises into a Latin translation and published them in 1575" (von Franz, 1979, p. 27). Jung was particularly interested in Dorn's alchemical texts and refers to Dorn frequently throughout his Collected Works.

Although the coniunctio is central to alchemy, Schwartz-Salant (1995) asserts that Jung's interpretation of the Attis-Cybelle myth is as important to modern people because it is a "part of a thread running throughout Western culture, probably dating from the end of the Neolithic Age. It represents a state

of mind and body that has never been adequately addressed" (p. 30). Here, Jung is referring to a state of mind and body that reflects "the fragmentation and dissociation of psyche" (p. 30). According to Schwartz-Salant, Jung found that this state has significantly affected the development and pathology of Westerners, a contrast from Freud's belief that repression was the primary cause of psychic problems. In Jung's study of this myth, he concludes that the self-mutilation of Attis who was in a state of profound guilt and madness represents the fragmented state of the Western psyche, whereas Cybelle represents the Great Goddess who has been suppressed by Western culture.

According to Schwartz-Salant (1995), Attis is a metaphor for Western culture that is in a state of dissociation in which "the spirit of union has not been extracted" (p. 30). Schwartz-Salant proposes that this problem "is still our prima materia" (p. 30), the West is in a state of undifferentiated chaos. Schwartz-Salant is referring to a primal state of wholeness and chaos where there is no consciousness of the other. Because consciousness can only be achieved by a separation from the undifferentiated whole, Schwartz-Salant, as do many of the previously cited authors of alchemical texts, emphasizes the importance of consciousness in the alchemical process.

Schwartz-Salant (1995) provides an example to clarify his claims about the Western need for separation from the primal state. The Attis-Cybelle myth represents the state of fusion (lack of emotional separation from the other) that frequently exists in the relationship between a man and woman. Speaking from

the perspective of a male, Schwartz-Salant posits that "a man's consciousness and his capacity to enter and discover new psychic territory, will be experienced by him as if it were in the grip of another force that prevents such discoveries" (p. 31). His fear about being engulfed in a relationship may result from an incapacity to separate from his mother, resulting in a view that all women are dangerous, and his expectation that women should be "understanding, loving, giving, but not people with their own needs and patterns of existence" (p. 31). The woman in this situation may also "experience a similar intersubjective field: an inner force, which has a male image to it" (p. 31). This feeling "compels her into involvement and fusion with others" (p. 31). Schwartz-Salant believes that an alchemical approach such as modeled in the three stages of the coniunctio, separations followed by reintegration, is the way to address this problem. An alchemical perspective would transform the state of fusion "into a field that had a rhythmical dynamic of separation and fusion, without either polarity dominating" (p. 32). In short, Schwartz-Salant suggests that each would become conscious of their patterns of fusion by first separating from the fusion and then reintegrating that consciousness into the relationship, thereby creating a continuing rhythmic action of separation followed by reintegration. The field created by relationship of two is thus the means that allows each to become conscious of the patterns of fusion.

The state of fusion between a man and woman is but one example of the effects of a dominant ego consciousness and a concomitant lack of awareness of

psyche. Schwartz-Salant (1995) demonstrates his concern about the dominance of the ego in Western culture, for he concisely charts the development of ego-consciousness since the Renaissance. He begins with the re-emergence of alchemy during the Renaissance, a time when people saw relationships in all levels of existence. He continues through the Cartesian separation of body and mind to the consolidation of the scientific revolution that began in the 17th century. In that century, consciousness developed an objectivity of nature and self-awareness. Although a necessary development in the evolution of consciousness, the resulting split between subject and object has negative effects. Schwartz-Salant suggests that alchemy provides us with "a way to return to wholeness without abandoning separation and distinction of process" (p. 4) and tells us about "the mystery of relations between things, and upon one's relation to the cosmos" (p. 19).

Von Franz

Von Franz (1980) also contributes excellent introductions to alchemy. In Alchemy, a major inspiration for this study, von Franz presents three different forms of European alchemy in a series of lectures: an Old Greek text from the Codex Marcianus entitled "The Prophetess Isis to her Son," an Arabian work by Mohammed ibn Umail, and Aurora consurgens which she describes as "an immediate religious experience of the unconscious" (p. 177) attributed to Thomas Aquinas. Her interpretations are based on studies of the ancient texts rather than

translations. Von Franz thus provides an invaluable source of depth-psychological perspectives of direct alchemical experiences.

Von Franz's lectures on the Aurora consurgens are transcribed in Alchemy (1980). However, the complete text of the Aurora Consurgens (von Franz, 1951/1966) and her commentary that were included as part of the Swiss edition of Jung's Mysterium Coniunctionis are omitted in the English version. For von Franz, Aurora Consurgens is a text that is concerned with the nature of consciousness and the attainment of new levels of consciousness. Although von Franz did not complete any studies on Chinese alchemy and was apparently unfamiliar with Complete Reality Taoism, parallels with Taoism can be found in her studies. For example, her differentiation of revealed knowledge (religious, supernatural) and natural knowledge acquired through reason is congruent with the Complete Reality Taoism differentiation of celestial knowledge (knowledge that we are endowed with) and conscious or acquired knowledge. This similarity is repeated in her discussion on the effects of a direct experience of the unconscious. She states that "contact with the unconscious opens the prison which we have made for ourselves with our conscious views and ego-bound aims" (p. 252). In Complete Reality Taoism, the metaphor of a prison is also used to represent our use of "fixed labels and categories, compelled by the associations and structures" (Chang, 1987, p. 5) that restrict our minds. The correspondences in the differentiation of two kinds of consciousness and the use of prison as a metaphor to describe a restricted mind suggest that Chinese alchemy and

Western alchemy are describing similar processes and states of consciousness. As Lao-tzu (1989) informs us, "These two together emerge; They have different names yet they're called the same" (p. 53).

In her role as editor of Aurora Consurgens, von Franz (1951/1966) includes a discussion of the Turba Philosophorum and an oft-repeated theme in this literature review, the role of consciousness in the alchemical process. The Turba, printed in 1593 and traced to early Egyptian alchemy, is included in the Artis Auriferae, the first Western alchemical text that Jung received after his study of The Secret of the Golden Flower. According to von Franz, the Turba describes the "coming of consciousness" (p. 193) and acknowledges the role cognition plays in transforming knowledge of God into "empirically graspable form" (p. 193). The unconscious cannot exert its illuminating and helpful function without the participation of consciousness, a point that Cleary (Chang, 1987) stresses in his discussion of Complete Reality Taoism. The use of true intent, "autonomous will or concentration, associated with truthfulness, sincerity, and reliability" (p. 13) is a focal point of Taoist practice. Von Franz's statement about the necessity of the ego can be added to the growing list of similar claims made by alchemical scholars in this literature review.

Von Franz's (1979) interpretation of Dorn's writings, including The Chemical Philosophy and The Speculative Philosophy, also highlights the role that consciousness plays in the alchemical process. Although Dorn is an admirer of Paracelsus, von Franz claims that Dorn "returns to the Egyptian roots and is

mainly interested in the immortality of the body" (p. 20). She summarizes the first part of Dorn's work, "The Chemical Philosophy," from a copy of the "Theatrum Chemicum" Vol. 1, Strasbourg, 1679. Finding the second part, "The Speculative Philosophy" more interesting, von Franz follows Dorn's thoughts that waver between his experience of active imagination and his conflict with his Christian beliefs. Active imagination is a method of reverie that brings consciousness to unconscious material, a method that is used by Jung and many of his followers.

Hannah (1976), in her biography of Jung, emphasizes the role of the ego in active imagination, an engagement with the images of psyche. For Hannah, active imagination is notable because the "ego plays an active role--it makes a conscious decision to drop down into the fantasy and then plays an active role in the subsequent development" (p. 108). Through her study of Dorn's experience, von Franz (1979) finds that the alchemical process is "like an active imagination performed with symbolically meaningful substances" (p. 113). She reaches the following conclusion about Dorn's experience of active imagination:

> So there you see that what we now call the process of individuation which has the goal of oneness, becoming a one person, was already aimed at in a projected form . . . he [Dorn] sees that man also consists of different impulses and tendencies and that these must first be separated and clarified and then put together again by the well of love [in Dorn's active

> imagination, drinking from the well of love brings two conflicted parts together]. (p. 104)

The alchemical process, as does the individuation process, results in a unified personality. Von Franz's interpretation of Dorn's work brings a deeper understanding of the alchemical process in which separation and reintegration, a theme noted in Schwartz-Salant's above work, are identified as necessary steps. Von Franz's interpretation of Dorn's imagery provides another Western alchemical perspective that may bring meaning to the symbols in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987).

Edinger

Edinger (1985) concludes that the alchemical process not only reveals the anatomy of the psyche but it also is a "concretization of the individuation process" (p. 9) that can be observed in psychotherapy. An example is the alchemical state of nigredo, the blackness that brings a person to psychotherapy. For Edinger, the state of nigredo requires an alchemical separatio, separation of the problem from the state of fusion. In this state of fusion, people often project their emotional states on to others, believing that others are the cause of their problems. Separation is crucial for the development of an awareness of the opposites. Without separation, one remains in a state of participation mystique, identification with one side of a pair of opposites. Separatio is also necessary before there can be a recollection of emotional states that have been projected on to others. In his study, Edinger finds similar analogies between alchemical

processes such as sublimatio (sublimation), mortificatio (experience of death), and the coniunctio (the union of opposites) and the stages of therapy. The ultimate goal of psychotherapy is the goal of the alchemical process, the union of the opposites that brings a "manifestation of the Self" (p. 218).

Edinger (1995) brings a deeper understanding to the coniunctio in his study of Jung's "summa" (p. 17), Mysterium Coniunctionis. Edinger expresses his admiration for Jung's study of "the vast literature of alchemy, extending over many centuries, which Jung has mastered in an absolutely tour de force. He has condensed, extracted, and presented it all between these two covers" (p. 19). However, Edinger, aware that Jung's opus may be overwhelming for many readers, leads his reader through the major images by simplifying, elaborating, clarifying, and systematizing Jung's information. Edinger's goal is to help us understand this important process and to employ alchemical imagery in the process of amplifying dreams.

Edinger (1995) highlights several alchemical components of the coniunctio that are relevant to this study of Complete Reality Taoism. One such component is the philosophical pelican that is depicted in the following way: a smaller circle is surrounded by a larger circle that is equally divided into four parts. Jung discovered the pelican in the "Tractatus Hermetis," an alchemical treatise considered to be of Arabic origin. According to Jung (1955-56/1970), when the pelican "applies her beak to her breast, her whole neck with the beak is bent into the shape of a circle" (p. 11). As the creatrix of the circle, the pelican not only

represents an alchemical vessel but also the state of wholeness. As a graphic symbol, the pelican represents the three-stage alchemical process that unites the opposites. Edinger provides the following interpretation:

> Initially, there's one entity, a circle with a center. And one horizontal line is drawn that cuts it into two--above and below. Then a second line vertically that divides it into four. That gives us a sequence of one, two, four. Now you add these together, 1 + 2 + 4, and you get 7, the so-called magical Septenary [a reference to the synthesis of the seven planets that result in a totality]. (p. 30)

Edinger's interpretation identifies a cosmogony: the emergence of the two from the wholeness of one. From the two opposites arise the four elements that result in the seven planets.

A three-stage process is evident in Edinger's interpretation of the philosophical pelican: the first circle before the division into two represents the wholeness of the primordial state. The division into two takes place during the first stage. The division of the two into four occurs in the second stage whereas the third stage is a return to wholeness. This interpretation of the pelican identifies a similarity to the Taoist alchemical process that also occurs in three stages. Triads are a recurring theme of the alchemical process.

Edinger (1995) discovers other triads in Jung's interpretation of Dorn's study of the coniunctio. One triad if found in the beginning state of the coniunctio when three entities, body, soul, and spirit are all mixed together, three

in one. In this mixture, soul is desirous of the body and is interwoven with the body. The coniunctio describes a three-stage process that separates and reintegrates each entity of the triad. During the first stage, soul is separated from the body in order that it can unite with spirit and "go against the body" (p. 278). The union of soul and spirit is a significant component, the unio mentalis (mental union). In the second stage, the unio mentalis, the now united soul and spirit, reunites with the body. In the third stage, "the united spirit-soul-body, achieved in the second stage, is integrated with the world" (p. 279). Edinger's discussion of the coniunctio not only identifies triads and a pattern of separations and reintegrations, but also emphasizes a parallel with Chinese alchemy. The Chinese alchemical process that will be discussed below is also a three-stage process: the refining of ching, ch'i, and shen, three cosmological energies.

Jung

Edinger, Schwartz-Salant, and von Franz all base their studies on Jung's alchemical exploration, the most extensive modern study of the subject. In addition to Jung's followers, Needham (1983) and Eliade (1956/1962) also recognize the importance of Jung's alchemical studies. Needham (1980), however, contends that Jung had not recognized the "extent to which alchemy embodied primitive chemistry" (p. 14), but Eliade reminds us that scientific progress is not the only contribution the alchemists made. Eliade proposes that Jung's psychological interpretation of alchemical tracts "has shown an analogous

polyvalence in 'alchemical' or 'mystic' operations; these are applicable at multiple levels and achieve corresponding results" (p. 224).

The following review that introduces Jung's alchemical studies focuses on his interest in the images that arise from psyche. The images of psyche were important to Jung for they helped him to understand the psychological development of his patients and one of his major concerns, the transformation of unconscious content to consciousness. Through his exploration of ancient works as well as the alchemic works of the Renaissance period and beyond, Jung (1937/1968) concludes that alchemy contributed to the development of humankind:

> It should now be sufficiently clear that from its earliest days alchemy had a double face: on the one hand the practical work in the laboratory, on the other a psychological process, in part consciously psychic, in part unconsciously projected and seen in the various transformations of matter. (p. 270)

Jung's alchemical studies have, from a historical perspective, been "far more useful for reflecting upon psychological changes than for understanding physical processes" (Schwartz-Salant, 1995, p. 3). Schwartz-Salant is a psychologist and believes that inner development is as important as physical development.

This view supports Schwartz-Salant's (1995) appreciation of Jung's approach expressed in the following discussion. Schwartz-Salant suggests that Jung occupies a middle position between the view that alchemy is a "projection

of an inner developmental process" (p. 11) and the view that alchemy is a "divine science in which mysteries are intentionally hidden from the uninitiated; they are encoded in chemical operations" (p. 11). According to Schwartz-Salant, Jung was "aware of the fact that a developmental process is at work, but the sense of self (the lapis) aimed for far transcends the notion of self generally found among developmental theories of various psychological schools of thought" (p. 11). Both Schwartz-Salant and Eliade recognize Jung's contribution to the alchemical way of knowing and being.

Jung's (1944/1968) contribution is exemplified in one of his early alchemical studies, his 12th volume, Psychology and Alchemy, that expands his 1935 and 1936 Eranos lectures. The lectures include examples of alchemical symbolism through the ongoing dreams of a young European man and introduce the nature of alchemy in relation to religion and psychology. In the epilogue to this work, Jung traces the development of the psyche that was projected "outside the body" (p. 480) to a state where it became the "personal possession, as chimerical phantasms of the ego-consciousness" (p. 480). As Jung explains, psyche "has become synonymous with consciousness. The psyche was 'what I know.' There was no psyche outside the ego" (p. 480). Jung could not have known that his discussion of an inflated ego reads like a psychological interpretation of the conditioned state in Complete Reality Taoism. In that form of Taoism, the daily vicissitudes of life result in the domination of acquired habits and thoughts so that the ego mistakenly thinks it is in charge of psychic

events. The similarity between Jung's view of ego-consciousness and the Complete Reality Taoism definition of conditioned consciousness is an example of the many correspondences between depth psychology and Chinese alchemy. Although Jung (1957/1967) may have not completely understood the workings of the Taoist cosmos, these correspondences between Chinese alchemy and his psychological perspectives as well as his interpretations of psyche's images will be sources of analogies that will help this exploration of Chinese alchemy.

The 13th volume of Jung's Collected Works, Alchemical Studies (1967), continues his interest in alchemy and psyche's images. This volume is an example of Jung's approach to alchemical symbolism and to the necessity of the alchemical process itself. In addition to his commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower, Jung includes the alchemical symbology from the visions of Zosimus, Paracelsus' work, Mercurius, and the philosophical tree, an archetypal image that Jung interprets to be a profile of a mandala. His exploration of the spirit Mercurius is especially relevant to the symbols found in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). Mercurius has many similarities to ch'i, the cosmic energy that represents the Two of the Taoist cosmogony. Ch'i, as the analysis of the metaphors in Understanding Reality will show, also has similarities with the Western notion of soul, one of the guises of Mercurius. For Jung, the symbols in these alchemical texts confirm the importance of the images created by psyche for "psyche needs to know the meaning of its existence" (p. 346). As Jung points out, psyche speaks to us in images and finding the meanings to the images is

necessary in both the healing of psychic wounds and in the development of individuals.

In the Practice of Psychotherapy, volume 16 of his Collected Works, Jung (1954/1966) continues his exploration of psyche's images in the symbolism of the coniunctio as presented in the illustrations of the "Rosarium Philosophorum" that are found in Volume 2 of the Artis Auriferae. The Artis Auriferae, a Latin treatise, was mentioned above in von Franz's study. Jung relates his interpretations of the Rosarium drawings and accompanying text to psychotherapeutic processes. The alchemical illustrations are taken from the 1550 edition of this tract, but according to the editors of Jung's work, the quotations are from the Artis Auriferae II (1559). These images present the stages of the alchemical process that lead to the coniunctio beginning with the descent of the soul into the unconscious. The resulting unio oppositorum, "union on the biological level" (p. 250) is a process leading to the production of a new birth, much like the embryo spirit-child of Taoism that results from the union of yin and yang. This process that will be explored in greater depth through an analysis of selected verses in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987).

The imagery of the coniunctio in the "Rosarium Philosophorum" is an introduction to Jung's (1955-56/1970) last work, considered a "summing up of all Jung's later works" (p. vi) that lasted more than 45 years, and his "last great work" (p. v) on alchemy. Although Edinger's (1995) interpretation of Jung's study of the stages of the coniunctio is mentioned above, Jung's own account

bears repeating here for it presents his perspective of the three-stage process. For Jung, at the beginning of the coniunctio, the body has a disturbing effect on the mind so that the first stage, the unio mentalis (mental union), requires that the "mind (mens) must be separated from the body--which is equivalent to a 'voluntary death'" (p. 471). Death is followed by union of the separated soul with spirit. In the second stage, the united spirit and soul reunites with the body and "is particularly important, as only from here can the complete conjunction be attained--union with the unus mundus [one world]" (p. 476), the third stage.

Jung's (1955-56/1970) psychological interpretation of the coniunctio is a rich resource of alchemical symbology. The following is an example:

> Just as the day-star rises out of the nocturnal sea, so, ontogenetically and phylogenetically, consciousness is born of unconsciousness and sinks back every night to this primal condition. This duality of our psychic life is the prototype and archetype of the Sol-Luna symbolism. So much did the alchemist sense the duality of his unconscious assumptions that, in the face of all astronomical evidence, he equipped the sun with a shadow. (p. 97)

In this extract, the motifs of duality, regression, and return to the unconscious can be seen as a separation followed by reintegration. This is a recurring pattern in this review of depth-psychological studies of alchemy.

Jung's alchemical studies, as do the other studies included in this review, present not only a model for an analogous technique that identifies the

archetypes in alchemical imagery but also a resource for analogies that will be necessary to find the meanings of the symbols in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). These analogies are necessary in any amplification. According to Edinger (1996b), "whenever we follow the method of amplification, which of course, is the hallmark of Jungian analysis, it is important as much as possible to choose the amplifications from many different contexts" (p. 12): "a myth here, a folktale there, a religious observance here" (p. 12). In following Edinger's counsel, this study will incorporate the interpretations and the writings from Taoist and Western scholars of alchemy including interpretations that do not have a depth-psychological perspective such as those of Cleary and Liu I-Ming whose commentary on Understanding Reality accompanies Cleary's translation of Chang's text. Liu is a Taoist whose writings date from the end of the 18th century through the first quarter of the 19th century.

The depth-psychological studies of Western alchemy are, however, particularly important to this paper for they introduce the subject of alchemy and serve as guides into a world that can overwhelm the explorer. This literature review also identifies recurring motifs such as the role of the ego in the alchemical process and tri-unities as well as the theme of separations followed by integrations. These themes, a few of the many similarities that can be found between Chinese and Western alchemy, are based on the Western perspective of alchemy. In order to reach a deeper understanding of the Complete Reality Taoism process and to enrich Jung's (1957/1967) commentary on The Secret of

the Golden Flower, the following review of Chinese texts will explore the foundations of Chinese alchemy.

Chinese Alchemy and Taoism

Introduction

This review of Chinese alchemy and Taoism will present the origins and development of Complete Reality Taoism, the form of Taoism that was practiced by Chang (1987), the author of Understanding Reality. Although Complete Reality Taoism is a school of Chinese alchemy, it is also considered to be a form of religious Taoism. Religious Taoism is itself an offshoot of philosophical Taoism so that it is difficult to differentiate the origins of Complete Reality Taoism or Chinese alchemy from philosophical Taoism. This review will summarize the Taoist beliefs and doctrines that have been incorporated into Complete Reality Taoism practices.

The history of philosophical Taoism begins in pre-historic China with the indigenous practices of shamans who were later called fang-shi. Huang Ti, who "was one of the Five Emperor-Sages belonging to China's Golden Age (2852 to 2255 BC)" (Blofeld, 1978, p. 19), is considered to be the traditional founder of the form of Taoism known as Huang-Lao, the form of Taoism carried on in Complete Reality Taoism. However, according to Cleary (1991c), Huang Ti is said to have learned the ancient knowledge of Taoism from Su Nu (Basic Woman). Throughout its written history, Taoism has been promulgated by patriarchal figures, but Cleary (1989) suggests a prehistoric matriarchal origin to Taoism.

Cleary concludes that it is Confucianism that influenced the suppression of women because Taoism has long accepted "very many women among its greatest figures" (p. ix). The likelihood of a matriarchal origin is mentioned here because the findings of this study suggest that the energy that emerges from the Tao is a feminine energy.

The roots of Complete Reality Taoism, a school that practices spiritual alchemy, are embedded in the early mystical shamanic practices that were integrated into philosophical thought that emerged at the time of the Warring States Period (475-221 BCE). The body of writings that resulted from this mixture was concerned with the nature of humanity and the meaning of life. Although Huang-Lao is considered to be the traditional form of Taoism, philosophical Taoism is referred to as the Lao-Chuang tradition named after the legendary Lao-tzu who is said to have lived during the 6th and 5th centuries BCE and Chuang-tzu who lived in the 3rd century BCE. By the time of the Eastern Han dynasty (25-219 CE), the climate in a unified China had facilitated the transformation of philosophical Taoism to an organized, communal religion. During the time of the Han, many of the literati were influenced by the then current religious doctrines and beliefs that included the Buddhist discipline that entered China during the 2nd century CE.

These beliefs developed into alchemical practices that can be linked to the rise of mystical Taoism known as Shang-ch'ing Taoism during the 2nd century. Shang-ch'ing Taoism replaced the Lao-Chuang tradition and became the leading

form of religion that reached its fullness during the Tang (618-907). Wong (1997b) defines the religion of Shang-ch'ing Taoism as follows:

> [It is] a world where guardian spirits live inside the human body; a world where mystics fly to the sky and journey among the stars; a world where people absorb the essence of the sun and moon to cultivate immortality; a world where the highest attainment in life is to merge with the Tao in bliss and ecstasy. (p. 44)

Wong's description highlights the shamanic lineage of Chinese alchemy and the belief in immortality.

As the Lao-Chuang tradition was replaced by the Shang-ch'ing religion, so was the Shang-ch'ing replaced by a newer synthesis of Chan Buddhism, Neo-Confucianism, and Taoism. The rise of this new form of religion occurred before the time of the Sung, the period in which Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) was completed. The teachings of Complete Reality Taoism as presented in Understanding Reality reflect the influences of Buddhism and Confucianism on Taoism but, as Kohn (1992) maintains, Taoism continues to be rooted in the Lao-Chuang tradition. Kohn claims that the Lao-Chuang influence continues as a "third dimension of Taoism, dependent on the other two [philosophical Taoism and religious], yet essential to neither" (p. 8). Kohn's position is supported by the continuing interest in these two widely disseminated texts, the Tao-te ching and the Chuang-tzu.

The importance of the writings in the Tao-te ching and the Chuang-tzu can hardly be understated for these two texts describe the ancient formulation of the Tao and its cosmos. These two texts will have a significant role in the interpretation of the alchemical metaphors in this study of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). In addition to the Tao-te ching and the Chuang-tzu, the Taoist cosmogony is presented in a text that precedes both, the I Ching. The I Ching is as relevant to this study because Complete Reality Taoism uses certain I Ching signs to represent the operations of the Taoist cosmogony. These signs are trigrams and hexagrams that will be addressed in the following discussion of the I Ching.

The Complete Reality Taoism use of the I Ching trigrams is an example of the perpetuation of ancient beliefs in later thought and writings. This example shows how the foundations of ancient Taoist thought are important to a study of Chinese alchemy and in interpreting Chang's instructions for the alchemical process. Such interpretations should lead to a deeper understanding of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process and expand Jung's (1957/1967) study of The Secret of the Golden Flower. Jung admits that he "did not have any knowledge of Chinese philosophy" (p. 11) when he first began his psychiatric career and only later discovered that the material of the Chinese text was "a living parallel to what takes place in the psychic development of my patients, none of whom is Chinese" (p. 11). In his commentary on The Secret of the

Golden Flower, Jung finds that the Chinese meditative process is associated with the circular movement of the Tao when "action is reversed into non-action" (p. 25):

> Psychologically, this circulation would be the "movement in a circle around oneself," so that all sides of the personality become involved. "The poles of light and darkness are made to rotate," that is, there is an alternation of day and night. The circular movement thus has the moral significance of activating the light and dark forces of human nature, and together with them all psychological opposites of whatever kind they may be. It is nothing less than self-knowledge by means of self brooding (Sanskrit, tapas). (pp. 25-26)

Jung also associates the movement of reversal with mandalas, a symbol of the union of opposites. Despite Jung's remarkably insightful descriptions and psychological interpretations of the Chinese way, he does not provide details of the source of the circular movements. He also does not pursue the subject of reversals beyond his finding that it is the action of the Tao and that "when yang has reached its greatest strength, the dark power of yin is born within its depths, for night begins at midday when yang breaks up and begins to change into yin" (p. 13). Had Jung delved deeper into Chinese thought and the Taoist cosmogony, he would likely have discovered that the circular movements and reversals are due to the cosmic energy ch'i as is the union of the opposites, consciousness and life. The vital energy ch'i is a significant element of the Taoist

cosmos that is itself the foundation of Taoist religious thought. The Taoist cosmogony has been incorporated in the doctrines of Complete Reality Taoism and Understanding Reality and is one of the primary foci of this study.

To this end, studies of the Taoist cosmogony and its components that are described in the I Ching, the Tao-te ching, and the Chuang-tzu will first be presented. These accounts of the Tao will be followed by a review of studies of three texts from the Han, the Huai-nan tzu and the Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i that include the first written accounts of alchemical practices and the P'ao p'u tzu. The Pa'o p'u tzu will be reviewed in the discussion on immortality as it is a text that not only includes alchemical practices but information on physical and spiritual immortality as well. The P'ao p'u tzu engenders a comparison between physical and spiritual immortality that will be followed by a presentation of the practices of external and internal alchemy. An introduction to Complete Reality Taoism as promulgated in Understanding Reality, and a discussion of how Complete Reality Taoism expands the association of Chinese alchemy and depth psychology, will complete this literature review.

The Taoist Cosmogony

This discussion of the Taoist cosmogony will introduce the Taoist world-view that addresses not only the meanings of the Tao but also the role that humans hold in the universe. This world-view is graphically represented in the signs of the I Ching as well as in the writings of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu that describe the creation of the universe from the Tao. Two later texts, the Huai-nan

tzu and the Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i include not only the Taoist cosmogony but also cosmic components such as the vital energy ch'i, its manifestation as the Three Treasures, and its transformations known as the Five Phases. The Five Phases are frequently referred to as the Five Agents and in Complete Reality Taoism, the transformations of cosmic energy are called the Five Elements. The cosmic components have been integrated in the alchemical language of Complete Reality Taoism and Chang's metaphors in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987).

The I Ching and the symbolic representation of the cosmos. The I Ching is a text transmitted almost without interruption from the past. The first emperor of the Chin Dynasty (221-207 BCE) destroyed not only all the country's scholars in 215 BCE, but also all of the literature except the I Ching. According to Wong (1997b), the I Ching that is available today can be traced to fragments of the Chou-i that Confucius collected in the sixth century BCE. The I Ching is based on observation of the natural cycles of the universe and is relevant to a study of Chinese alchemy.

From observations of nature's cycles, Taoists developed a world-view in which the One represents the Tao, the source of the universe. Because the goal of Chinese alchemy is frequently expressed as a return to the Source or the return to the origin, it follows that an understanding of the Taoist cosmogony is essential in understanding the alchemical process. In the I Ching, the cosmology of ancient China is represented through two symbols, the Wu-chi (the Great Void) and the T'ai-chi (the Ultimate Cause). The Wu-chi represents the primordial

condition that was present before the universe existed and, as the primordial state, is also the One of the cosmos described in the Tao-te ching. The Wu-chi is considered a void because it is "free from characteristics, self-existent, undifferentiated, vast beyond conception, yet present in full in a tiny seed" (Blofeld, 1978, p. 3). The T'ai-chi is derived from Wu-chi and is the Two of the cosmos described in the Tao-te ching; it is the other that is created by a separation from the One. The separation from the One that creates the Two occurs through the primordial breath of the Tao, the vital energy ch'i.

Jou (1984), a respected practitioner and teacher of T'ai chi ch'uan, a form of meditation based on physical movements, differentiates between the Wu-chi and the T'ai-chi: "when Wu-chi changes to T'ai-chi and a thing exists and can be observed a duality begins" (p. 20). The duality is a separation from the primordial state: without this separation, the primordial state maintains its wholeness; without separation, there is no opposition and the chaotic condition remains unchanged. The relationship between the Wu-chi and the T'ai-chi exemplifies the notion that there are two fundamental opposites. The separation that creates the two fundamental opposites of the Taoist cosmos is an ontological movement that contrasts with the dualism of the West. The dualism that separates mind and matter has, in the words of Jung (1957/1967),

> led to the unpardonable mistake of confusing intellect with spirit and blaming the latter for the misdeeds of the former. The intellect does indeed do harm to the soul when it dares to possess itself of the heritage

> of the spirit. It is in no way fitted to do this, for spirit is something higher than intellect since it embraces the latter and includes the feeling as well. (p. 9)

Jung is contrasting the Western world-view with the Chinese, that maintains a conscious connection with the polarity of all life, a unity of nature and spirit in which each embraces the other.

The Chinese world-view that acknowledges the relationship between the One of wholeness and unity and the Two of polarity and opposition is represented in the trigrams and hexagrams of the I Ching. The trigrams and the hexagrams in the I Ching originated from Emperor Fu Hsi's (2953-2938 BCE) study of nature including the heavens, earth, and himself:

> Out of this he created the eight trigrams as a method to commune with the spirits and invisible world, and a way to be part of everything within the visible world. He also used it to represent the relationships of everything in our three dimensional world and to build images of anything in our world. (Jou, 1984, p. 28)

This description is a reference to the process of divination for which the I Ching is renowned and to the wholeness of the world.

The divination is accomplished through a ritual using 50 yarrow sticks or three Chinese coins in conjunction with the trigrams and hexagrams. Each of the trigrams represents the binary nature of the cosmos through a solid line and a broken line. The primordial state is represented by a solid line that is the one of

the Ta'i-chi, the Supreme pinnacle, the Tao, or the original Chaos, and is yang. The broken lines are yin, the essence of "the principle of binary opposition, the principle of differences, without which there can be neither order nor, it follows intelligibility . . . , and without which there can be no dynamism" (Robinet, 1992/1997), p. 235). When placed in a circle, the sequence of the two forms, the solid line of wholeness and the broken line that represents separation, creates eight basic trigrams. The I Ching uses the movement around the circle consisting of the eight forms as a scheme to explain the principle of movement and cycles of the universe. The eight trigrams also generate 64 hexagrams that are used to commune with the spirits.

According to Robinet (1992/1997), a Professor of Chinese history and civilization, the trigrams

> offer a complete set of symbols, allowing a less discursive approach to that Truth to which interior alchemy wants to open itself. Diverted from their divinatory uses, the trigrams are taken as stylized, abstract forms of fundamental truths, as ways of speaking concisely, or bringing together several levels of truth in one single sign. (p. 232)

The binary system of the I Ching, the relationship between the Wu-chi and the T'ai-chi, covers all "interweaving polarities set in operation" (p. 232).

Better known for their use in divination, the trigrams and hexagrams are used by Taoists, including those who practice Complete Reality Taoism, as symbolic instruments that ensure a bond between themselves and their world.

This use reflects the profundity of the trigrams: not only do the solid and broken lines represent the binary opposition existing in the universe, the placement of each line is used to express three cosmological levels. According to the I Ching, each trigram represents the cosmos as follows: the bottom line represents earth, the middle line humans, and the top line heaven. These three levels are held in unity, an example of the wholeness of the Chinese world-view. As Jung (1957/1967) notes, the Chinese avoided the split between mind and matter or spirit and nature.

For Robinet (1992/1997), the use of the trigrams is an example of symbolic thinking allowing for a "burgeoning of freely multiplied metaphors used to designate a single datum with multiple facets, forming a configuration that can take shape in various settings" (p. 231). Her discussion about the use of trigrams and hexagrams tells us that "alchemic language exists on two levels. It is both a language, with its own vocabulary, and a use of this language--a meta-language--that both renders the language effective and at the same time indicates its death by going beyond it" (p. 233).

The use of the I Ching system of trigrams and hexagrams is a frequent occurrence in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). The four primary trigrams, Heaven, Earth, Fire and Water play a significant role in the alchemical process and are used by Chang (1987) as expressions of the union of the opposites. Heaven and Earth are the "parent signs" (p. 16) that represent pure yang and pure yin respectively. Three yang lines make up the sign for heaven; three yin

lines for earth. "These two signs thus may be used to indicate qualities or modes of being or praxis, such as movement and stillness, associated with yin and yang" (p. 16). The two trigrams, Fire and Water, represent the binary nature of the universe and are created from Heaven and Earth.

The following discussion of consciousness offers an example of the use of Fire and Water in Complete Reality Taoism and the depth of its symbolism. The sign of Fire which is composed of a yin component between two yang lines, or yang containing yin, "is generally used to refer to awareness, particularly the consciousness in the human mind. Fire is treated as a modification of heaven, indicating that awareness is originally, 'celestial'" (Chang, 1987, p. 16). The yin component in the middle can stand for flexibility, adaptability and receptivity for "it represents the quality of openness or flexibility that is originally a characteristic of consciousness" (Chang, 1987, pp. 16-17). The sign of Water, a yang line between two yin lines, or yin holding yang, is used to refer to the real knowledge of the mind of Tao. The yang component in the middle "stands for the original integrated real knowledge that has become buried by mundane conditioning, here represented by two yin components surrounding it" (Chang, 1987, p. 17).

The above discussions of levels of the cosmos and consciousness represented by the trigrams, illustrate the ability of the system of trigrams to bring together several levels of reality in one single sign. The trigrams Fire and Water can also represent cosmic energy that manifests after the creation of the

universe as well as the binary nature of the vital energy known as yin and yang. Through the yin lines and yang lines, the trigrams and hexagrams reinforce the Taoist alchemical goal of regeneration and recreation of the primordial state by illustrating that the body, like the universe had its origin in non-being. The trigrams also illustrate the reverse process that blends the two polarities allowing a return to the original state of non-being. In addition, the trigrams "offer a complete set of symbols, allowing a less discursive approach to that Truth to which interior alchemy wants to open itself" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 232). Metaphors open the minds to other ways of thinking whereas the use of words encourages habitual, that is, conditioned thinking.

The I Ching expresses at least two aspects of the Taoist cosmos that will be helpful in interpreting the verses in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) and in enriching Jung's' (1957/1967) commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower: the role of humankind in the cosmos and the significance of metals. First, people are cosmic beings, "on a par with Heaven and Earth" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 12) and are able to intervene in the rhythms of the universe because humankind resulted from the union of the upper pole of Heaven and the lower pole of Earth. Each person, according to Robinet (1992/1997), "is the hybrid mediator, the element that both unites and separates" (p. 12) Heaven and Earth. In this position, humans have not only the ability to anticipate a natural outcome, but also a responsibility to recreate the pristine quality of the original state, even though they are conditioned and contaminated by the experiences of daily life.

Although the goal of religious Taoists is "to create a clear and close union between the interior and exterior world" (p. 18) with humans intervening in the cosmic rhythms, it should be emphasized that humanity is only secondary in the Taoist pantheon. This view is a result of Confucian influence that widened the gap between the individual and the exterior world. Since the integration of Confucian ideas in Taoism, "the exterior world is understood above all as consisting of Nature, the cosmos, the natural world, and only secondarily of human society" (p. 18).

Another aspect of the Taoist cosmogony explains the use of metals in alchemical metaphors. The universe is the result of a slow gestation of the Primordial Breath that emerges from the One of the Taoist cosmos. Believing that nature is an organism that is constantly recreating itself and that every item of nature is imbued with a life-cycle, ancient Chinese alchemists deduced that minerals and metals also grew slowly inside the earth, developing along a scale of perfection. In Complete Reality Taoism, metals can be used to express different manifestations of the Primordial Breath. In addition to gold, the metals include silver, cinnabar, mercury, and lead. The use of metals exemplifies the belief that everything in the universe has the potential to be transformed, including people.

The Tao-te ching, Chuang-tzu, and the Tao. Two texts continue the belief, promoted in the I Ching, that everything in the universe originates from the Tao. The following review, an introduction to these two texts, focuses on the meaning

of Tao for it is germinal to Chinese alchemical thought. Both Lao-tzu, author of the Tao-te ching and Chuang-tzu hold that the Tao:

> is nameless, invisible and ungraspable by normal modes of perception. It is boundless and cannot be exhausted, although all depend upon it for existence. Hidden beneath the transition and change, the Tao is the permanent underlying reality. (Wong, 1997b, p. 23)

This world-view is the foundation of Taoist thought, the center of all future Taoist thinking.

Although Huang Ti was mentioned above as one of the founders of Huang-Lao Taoism, the most famous figure is Lao-tzu (ca. 570 BCE), the second figure referred to in Huang-Lao Taoism. He is considered to be the author of the Tao-te ching, an anthology of ancient sayings, poems, and proverbs. Along with the Chuang-tzu, the Tao-te ching presents the philosophical and practical core of classical Taoism. Both have had a ubiquitous impact on all forms of Chinese thought and behavior. According to Ames (1998), a Professor of Philosophy and scholar of Taoism, the present form of the Tao-te ching was likely compiled in the 4th and 3rd centuries BCE and edited sometime between 250 and 150 BCE.

Like the earlier I Ching, the Tao-te ching and the Chuang-tzu survived the ravages of censorship, war, and time. As recently as 1282, an anti-Taoist political climate resulted in the destruction of all Taoist books except the Tao-te ching. Before the Ma-wang-tui excavations in 1973, researchers used Tao-te ching manuscripts dating from the Six Dynasties period (229-589 CE) and Tang Dynasty

(618-907 CE) stone inscriptions. The Ma-wang-tui excavations provided the earliest texts of the Tao-te ching dating from the 2nd century BCE. When compared with the later texts that had been available before the discovery of the Ma-wang-tui texts, Kohn (1992) notes that the texts of the newly discovered editions present the material in fundamentally the same order. For Kohn, the confirmation that the later manuscripts had not deviated from the earlier texts reflects the integrity of Taoist tradition and more importantly, the "sacred nature of the document and the divinization of its alleged author" (p. 59). The integrity of Taoism, as exemplified in the Tao-te ching, not only has influenced Chinese philosophy and government, its teachings have manifested in such spheres as the arts, medicine, mythology, education, and internal alchemy. Most significantly, the Tao-te ching presents, for the first time, the meaning of the Tao as the "Ultimate Truth" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 26).

The Chuang-tzu is another ancient text that addresses the meaning of the Tao. Chuang is believed to have lived approximately from 369 to 286 BCE. The Chuang-tzu contains 33 chapters and, like the Tao-te ching, is considered to be a composite. "The opening seven 'inner chapters' are traditionally thought to be the literary product of Master Zhuang himself, whereas the remaining 'outer' and 'miscellaneous' chapters are taken to be later elaborations and commentary by members of what retrospectively can be called a Master Zhuang school" (Ames, 1998, p. 1).

The Chuang-tzu is the longest of the Taoist classics. Graham (Chuang-tzu, 1981), translator and interpreter of the text, notes that its philosophy "expresses the side of a Chinese civilisation which is spontaneous, intuitive, private, unconventional, the rival of Confucianism, which represents the moralistic, the official, the respectable" (p. 3). Ames (1998) concludes that the Chuang-tzu differs from the Tao-te ching in its "focus on personal spirituality and insight, whereas the Daodejing [Tao-te ching] is more concerned with the social and political consequences of this heightened state of awareness" (p. 1). The philosophical view of the Chuang-tzu is relevant to an understanding of Chinese alchemy because Chinese alchemists repeatedly refer to the teachings of the Chuang-tzu and its perspectives of the Tao and its cosmogony.

Chuang-tzu (1942) claims that "the Tao which is manifest is not" (p. 639) and Lao-tzu (1989) states that the Tao is nameless. The literal meaning of Tao is "way" or wayfaring, a road or a path. Cleary (1991a), Fischer-Schreiber (1986/1996), Robinet (1992/1997), as well as Schipper (1982/1993), a Taoist scholar, and Waley (1958), an English translator of the Tao-te ching, agree that the Tao represents an ideal that is not only nameless but one that has many meanings, such as teaching, the Way of Man, the mother of the universe, "the reality that gives rise to the universe" (Fischer-Schreiber, 1986/1996). As mentioned previously, Jung professes that the psychological meaning of the Tao is the process that reunites consciousness with the unconscious. Jung's

conclusion is congruent with the Taoist view that the Tao manifests in both the inner world and outer world of each person. As Cleary explains:

> considering the ultimate nature of the Way to be inherently beyond the bounds of human conception, ancient Taoists sought traces of the Way in the patterns of events taking place in the natural world, the social world, and the inner world of the individual psyche. Eventually the scope of the Way led them to undertake the investigation of vast domains of knowledge and experience. (p. 1)

Cleary's discussion not only tells us why the Way can be a symbol for the whole spectrum of the search for knowledge but also points out the psychological aspects of the Tao .

Kohn (1992) provides a less literal definition that emphasizes the psychic nature of the Tao: the Tao is "ineffable and defies all sensual definition; it cannot be seen, heard, or felt. Yet it can be reached. Chinese mystics strive to 'become one with the Great Thoroughfare' [Zhuangzi 6] and to live in spontaneous oneness with the Tao" (p. 8). She adds, "however vague and elusive, the Tao is at the root of all existence. It makes the world function, brings all beings to life, and orders the entire universe, ever transforming and changing continuously" (p. 46).

Blofeld (1978) contributes a poetic description of the Tao:

> The Tao is unknowable, vast, eternal. As undifferentiated void, pure spirit, it is the mother of the cosmos; as non-void, it is the container, the sustainer and, in a sense, the being of the myriad objects, permeating all.

> As the goal of existence, it is the Way of Heaven, of Earth, of Man. No being, it is the source of Being. It is not conscious of activity, has no purpose, seeks no rewards or praise, yet performs all things to perfection. Like water, it wins its way by softness. Like a deep ravine, it is shadowy rather than brilliant. (pp. 2-3)

In this mystical description, the primordial energy of the Tao is seen as the source of life and the origin of all things.

Blofeld's (1978) description illustrates Needham's (1980) reference to the Tao as a nomenclature for all the phenomena of Nature. Needham, finds, as does Blofeld, that the Tao, being limitless is the Wu-chi, the T'ai-chi, the Tai-I (Great Changer), T'ien (Heaven) and "is the Mother of Heaven and Earth, without whose nourishment nothing could exist "(Blofeld, p. 3). The Tao is the source of all but just as important is the return to the Tao, one of the germinal components of Chinese alchemy: the Return to the Tao is synonymous with the achievement of immortality. During the politically stable climate of the Han, not only the Tao, but the One of the Wu-chi and the Two of the T'ai-chi are also developed to a new level and are described, along with the other elementals of the Tao, in three texts, the Huai-nan-tzu, Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i and Pa'o pu tzu.

Taoism and spiritual alchemy: the Huai-nan-tzu and the Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i. This review of the Huai-nan-tzu and the Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i carries on the background of the development of spiritual alchemy as espoused in Complete Reality Taoism. The Huai-nan-tzu is a philosophical text that is valued by later

religious Taoists because it addresses higher human evolution. According to Fischer-Schreiber (1986/1996), Robinet (1992/1997), and Wong (1997b), the Huai-nan-tzu was compiled by the followers of Prince Liu An (180-122 BCE). The Huai-nan-tzu includes material on political and military strategies along with transcendental concerns of the fang-shih, shamanic practitioners: "inner psychic processes being represented metaphorically by such outer natural processes as the progress of the seasons. This device in particular became very popular later in the literature of Taoist spiritual alchemy" (Chang, 1986, p. ix). Needham (1974) identifies a clearly recognizable connection between aurefaction, the attempt to produce gold from base metals, and the desire for longevity and immortality in this text.

The Huai-nan-tzu includes the cosmology and "cosmic entities" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 17) that are crucial to the teachings of Complete Reality Taoism that developed nearly a thousand years later. This text differentiates the Primordial Breath that brings to birth the world into two: "a pure and light breath that rose to form the sky and a heavy, opaque breath that sank to form the earth" (p. 47). The Primordial Breath is responsible for the fundamental division of the world into two opposing tendencies before giving rise to the "ten thousand beings" (p. 12). The separation of the Primordial Breath is a model for the polarities of the human p'o and hun souls as well as the cycling patterns of yin and yang and the Five Agents that are based on Taoist beliefs. The following discussion will address these cosmic entities.

According to Robinet (1992/1997), the Huai-nan-tzu is an attempt at syncretism of "Taoist and Confucian ideals, correlating them with borrowings from Legalism, which were politically and socially more realistic" (p. 47). Ames (1998) adds that this syncretic framework "helped set a pattern for the Daoist contribution to Chinese culture across the sweep of history" (p. 8). Internal alchemists who integrated the cosmological system of Lao-tzu into the cosmos of the I Ching continued this pattern. In the Tao-te ching, the Tao gives birth "to the One, then the Two, the Three and the ten thousand beings" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 229); in the I Ching, the One is divided "into two, then four, then eight and so on" (p. 229). Robinet notes that internal alchemists "had no trouble reconciling the two very different points of view implied" (p. 229).

The One of either cosmos, that described in the Tao-te ching or in the I Ching, is a fundamental element for it is not only the state before the creation of the universe, it is also the source of everything in the universe. Just as necessary is the Two of the cosmos for without its separation, there is only the potential of a universe. The Two of the Taoist cosmos is created when the Primordial Breath, or ch'i, separates from the One. The separation into the Two creates a polarity consisting of yin and yang. Ch'i, arising from the chaos of the primordial state of Tao is the component responsible for the ceaseless re-creation of the universe and is "neither matter nor spirit" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 33). Needham (1974) considers ch'i to be on the borderline between matter and spirit. A universal

energy, it is always flowing "between yin and yang, trying to find a balance in nature" (Craze, 1997, p. 10). Yet ch'i is neither yin nor yang.

Generally, pure yin and pure yang that arise from ch'i can only be found "in cosmic form yet to be described" (Blofeld, 1978, p. 5). Yin and yang, the polar transformations of ch'i, and their cycles constitute the first physical law of Taoism. This duality is a relationship between binary opposition that covers all of the possible polarities. The polarity of ch'i, perhaps more than any other Taoist term, emphasizes the difference between Chinese thought and the dualism that characterizes the Western world. Although Jung's (1957/1967) discussion of yin and yang in his commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower corresponds to Robinet's (1992/1997) statement that yin and yang are two complementary and mutually repelling poles, Robinet emphasizes that they represent a binary nature that "is not a dualism but a polarity" (p. 234). A polarity is held together by a tension that maintains a unity whereas a dualism does not. Schipper (1982/1993) explains how the polarity is maintained:

> Yin and yang serve to designate cold and hot, moon and sun, soft and hard, feminine and masculine, life and death. Their complementary opposition exists in everything and their alternation is the first law of Chinese cosmology: when yin reaches its apex, it changes into yang and vice-versa. (p. 35)

The cycles that transform yin and yang into the other are representative of the alternations of all the opposites in the world. Each opposite contains the seed of the other.

According to Needham (1980), these opposites include "passive and active phases through which any natural cycle must pass" (p. 223). The active and passive phases are also known as yin and yang:

> Yin and yang are lines of force, directions whose nature is to cross and mingle, to play against and with each other, both self-generating and self-propelling, disappearing and alternating; and their function is to define a double syntax of polarity and ambiguity. Neither can exist at its extreme; at that point it reverses into its opposite. (p. 8)

In Chinese alchemical thought, separations result in polarities that reflect the unity of the universe. The relationship between the two opposites are represented in the T'ai-chi. Although mentioned previously, this mandala and its significance in Chinese alchemy will be addressed in greater depth in the last chapter of this study.

According to Cleary (Chang, 1987), the yin and yang relationship is central to Complete Reality Taoism for this relationship represents different states of consciousness that are a part of the alchemical process. The three states of consciousness, expressed as the three phases of yin and yang, fostering yin and yang, blending yin and yang, and transcending yin and yang, are also the three stages of the alchemical procedure. In the practice of Complete Reality

Taoism, the three phrases of yin and yang represent a three-stage process in which conditioned consciousness is transformed into a world-transcending higher consciousness. This process is also considered to be a return to the void of the Tao.

Another ancient Taoist doctrine that has been integrated into Complete Reality Taoism and is related to movements of yin and yang is known as the Five Agents. The alternations of the two opposites are described in more specific detail through the doctrine of the Five Agents, the second physical law of Taoism. Blofeld (1978), Fischer-Schreiber (1986/1996), and Needham (1980) describe the Five Agents as activities or processes rather than elements and representations of certain basic characteristics of matter. Needham believes that a more accurate and literal translation of the Five Agents is Five Phases. He states that these were not material elements but a "finer division of the cycle into five qualitatively and functionally distinct parts" (p. 223). These five are dynamic principles and are related to each other in a cycle of creation and a cycle of destruction. These principles known as the Five Agents and Five Elements will henceforth be referred to in this study as the Five Phases.

The Five Phases also incorporate the Chinese belief of the unity of the microcosm and macrocosm. Each person is endowed with all of the components of the cosmos (expressed through the Five Phases) that correlate simultaneously with cardinal points, season, and hours of the day. They also correlate with colors and with the bodily organs" (Robinet, 1979/1993, p. 51). As each phase

activates its sector, according to the succession of the seasons or the path of the sun during the day, it reflects how "the universe is governed by a changing equilibrium in which the various forces that animate it are never equal, but dominate in turn in alternating hegemonies" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 11). The doctrine of the Five Phases expresses the constant changes of the alternating cycles of yin and yang.

The Five Phases, Earth, Wood, Metal, Water, and Fire have two cycles that reflect the binary nature of ch'i: (1) a creative phase and a destructive phase and (2) the alternation of forces. Fire represents the phase in which activity is at its highest and must begin to decline. Summer is the time of year for Fire and its cardinal point is south. Fire also represents yang at its apogee, whereas Water represents yin at its apogee. Water is associated with north and Winter. Wood and Metal represent the intermediary phases with Wood associated with the East and Spring, whereas Metal is associated with the West and Fall. The Earth represents a fifth element that allows for the cohesion of the preceding four and is associated with the center. In the creative cycle, the phases lead from one to the other: Water produces Wood; Wood, Fire; Fire, Earth; Earth, Metal; and Metal, Water. In the destructive cycle, Water opposes Fire; Fire opposes Metal; Metal opposes Wood; Wood opposes Earth; Earth opposes Water. Taoists consider an understanding of these cycles important in recognizing and predicting changes in the universe because the Five Phases determine the course of natural phenomena.

Cleary (Chang, 1987) translates the principle of the Five Phases as the Five Elements. According to Cleary, the goal is to assemble the five bases to reconstitute the microcosm, the human being. Reconstitution is necessary because of the conditioned state (psychologically, ego-consciousness) resulting from the following cycle:

> The conditioned equivalents produce the circle of temperament overcoming will so that the latter degenerates into arbitrary intentions; arbitrary intentions overcome real knowledge so that it degenerates into desire; desires overcome consciousness so that it becomes volatile and unstable; volatility overcomes sense so that it fragments into feelings; feelings overcome essence so that it is molded into temperament. (p. 9)

This cycle of destruction describes the degeneration of celestial knowledge to a conditioned consciousness. In Complete Reality Taoism, the reversal of this cycle is described as completing the Five Elements.

Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i, or Triplex Unity, mentioned above in regard to Jung's Chinese alchemical studies, incorporates the cycles of yin and yang as well as the processes of the Five Phases. A text concerned solely with alchemical thoughts and practices, the "three" in the title, according to Sivin (1968), refers to the alchemical operation, Taoist theories, and the system of Changes (derived from the signs of the I Ching). According to Cleary (1991c), the Complete Reality School of Taoism regards the Ts'an-tung-ch'i as a classic text on spiritual alchemy. The transformation from a conditioned state to the recreation of a

spiritual state is a motif clearly identified in the Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i. Although the Ts'an-t'ung- ch'i describes the alchemical process through the use of external alchemical laboratory equipment, there is also mention of meditation techniques to still the mind and dissolve desire. The process of reversal is described as the gathering and transformation of internal energy that is expressed through the doctrine of the Three Treasures, a doctrine that reflects the Taoist word view.

According to Blofeld (1978), T'san-t'ung-ch'i explicates the Taoist view of the nature of existence: "(1) the indivisibility and indeed identity of spirit and matter; and (2) the identical workings of nature's laws at every possible level and every possible mode of being" (p. 114). Wong (1997b) associates this world-view with alchemical thought and practices. She finds that the T'san-t'ung-ch'i:

> regards the Tao as the origin of all things and the primordial energy of the Tao as the source of all life. As nature renews itself by following the principles of the Tao, mortals, too, can renew themselves and attain immortality by living in accordance with these principles. (p. 69)

The notion that humans, the microcosm, can be transmuted is based on observations of nature's cycles, the macrocosm.

In the Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i, this belief is propounded in the doctrine of the Three Treasures: within the microcosm, the human body, as within the macrocosm, heaven and earth, exist three treasures, ching (essence), ch'i (vitality), and shen, (spirit). According to Cleary (Chang, 1987), the three

treasures "might be defined as the fundamental productive, kinetic, and conscious forces of life" (p. 10). These forces are refined in a three-stage process that Blofeld (1978) interprets as follows:

> In alchemic terms, coarse ching has provided the initial substrate for transmutations; using the body as furnace and cauldron, and with ch'i as the wind to fan the furnace, the ultimate product has been attained by a process of continual refinement--namely, subtle shen so refined as to be conceived of as a spirit-body ready to plunge back into the cosmic void; and carrying the analogy further, the chemical reagents by which this has been achieved have been ching, ch'i, and shen. (p. 152)

This three-stage alchemical process, refining ching into ch'i; refining ch'i into shen; and finally, refining shen into the cosmic void, is the model for the organization of this study. Each stage in the alchemical process will be addressed in separate chapters that follow this literature review.

Although the Ts'an-t'ung-chi presents the doctrine of the Three Treasures and is considered to be one of the major source books for Chinese alchemy, Blofeld (1978), Cleary (Chang, 1987), and Fischer-Schreiber (1986/1996) conclude that the language of this text is highly enigmatic, esoteric, and difficult. In contrast, the language of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) is more explicit. According to Cleary, Robinet (1992/1997) and Wong (1997b), adherents of both Northern and Southern Schools of Taoism hold both the Ts'an-t'ung-chi and

Understanding Reality in high regard and use both as basic reference texts for interior alchemy. Both are respected as classic alchemical texts.

The Ts'an-t'ung'ch'i has influenced the Complete Reality Taoism teachings expressed in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). The Three Treasures is "an important trinity" (Chang, 1987, p. 10) in Complete Reality Taoism where it is also known as the three jewels and the three bases, vitality, energy, and spirit. In the Complete Reality School of Taoism, the technique to boost ching (vitality) is referred to in terms of sexual yoga whereas the technique to nurture or refine ch'i (energy) is couched in terms of health and physical language. Efforts to refine shen, the spiritual component, usually employ some sort of meditation or contemplation. Cleary (Chang, 1987) believes that these exercises of introversion reveal a Buddhist influence whereas the efforts of the Complete Reality Taoism practice are focused on transcending the meditative phase of formless enlightenment through a personal experience of the Tao.

This review of the six ancient Taoist texts follows the shamanic roots of Taoism that were enriched through the succeeding centuries with the genius of China's early philosophers and a climate that nurtured a religious world-view that maintains the wholeness of the One. Although millennia have passed, the traditions that began in the mists of China's pre-history continue to influence modern thought and practices. This mixture of shamanic practices and philosophical thought is at the center of Taoist philosophy, Taoist religion, and Taoist alchemy. The model of the Taoist cosmogony, a cosmos that is constantly

recreating itself by a fundamental division, sets the structural norm for all religious Taoism practices. The cosmogony is a model for humans for they too, have separated from the Tao and not only have the means but also a responsibility to return to their source. These principles of the unity of the macrocosm and microcosm have been inculcated in the practice of Complete Reality Taoism. Knowledge of the Taoist principles should therefore not only aid the interpretation of the metaphors in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) and Chang's instructions for the Chinese alchemical process and its goal, immortality, but also enrich Jung's (1957/1967) commentary on his first study of Chinese alchemy, The Secret of the Golden Flower. A closer look at how knowledge of the Taoist cosmogony enriches Jung's commentary is presented in the final chapter of this study.

Immortality: The Aim of Alchemy

The prior introduction to the Taoist cosmogony identifies the unequivocal position that the Tao holds in alchemical thought: the Tao is not only the source of all in the universe, the return to the Tao is the attainment of immortality. Although knowledge of the Taoist perspective of their cosmos is essential in understanding the goal of immortality, it is helpful to explore the beginnings of the Chinese desire for spiritual immortality. As early as the Han, the efforts to achieve longevity were accepted as futile and spiritual immortality then became the goal. This view is reflected in the development of spiritual alchemy when external alchemical practices were replaced with those of internal alchemy.

Physical immortality. Needham (1974), a rich resource on Chinese alchemy, finds that the desire for physical immortality originated from the Chinese desire for longevity. Prior to the early alchemical experiments, the Chinese believed in the importance of the present and not some future paradise. A long life insured continued enjoyment of Earth's splendors. This view is evident in the 6th century BCE Ch'u Tz'u, The Songs of the South (Hawkes, 1985):

> O soul, come back! Why have you left your old abode and fled to the earth's far corners?
>
> Deserting the place of your delight to meet all those things of evil omen?
>
> O soul, come back! In the east you cannot abide. (p. 224)

The soul of the departed ruler is summoned back from the unfriendly and fearsome environment of the after-life.

A belief in an after-life can be found even earlier, the Shang period (1200-1059 BCE). Shang bronzes tell of the Yellow Springs (Hades) where a portion of the soul, the p'o, of the departed is destined. The Chinese believe that humans have two kinds of soul consisting of at least two of air (hun) and two of earth (p'o). These souls are very subtle "on the verge of being non-material" (Needham, 1974, p. 86): "the p'o that lingers near the corpse sharing its disintegration and the hun that enjoys a longer but not limitless existence in the upper regions" (Blofeld, 1978, p. 14). Without the body to contain these two kinds of soul, the hun, a component from the upper air, is received back by the ouranic regions, whereas the p'o soul, generated by the earth, sinks down to its

chthonic origins. Needham (1974) writes of the ancient cult of hsien that affirms the necessity of the body to house the soul and thus prevents the hun and p'o souls from dissipating into the vastness of the upper air or as shades down into the terrestrial essences of the Yellow Springs.

The quest for immortality grew out of a desire to ensure the continuation of the physical body and maintain the viability of the hun and p'o. By the 8th century BCE, Chinese texts attest to a belief in physical immortality that was perpetuated by the fang-shih. The fang-shih originated from the "archivist-soothsayers of antiquity, one of whom supposedly was Laozi himself; under the Shang and Zhou they were the only ones who knew divination and writing" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 37). They used diets, drugs, alchemy, physical practices, and "certainly also mental states" (Kohn, 1991, p. 85) in an effort to train the intellect, along with physiological and visionary exercises. By the 3rd century BCE, the belief in physical immortality is recognizable in records of Tsou Yen (350 to 270 BCE) and his followers, who "sought ways to convert longevity into material immortality" (Needham, 1980, p. 13). The seeds of spiritual immortality are evident in the use of psychic exercises.

Needham (1974) traces the development of the belief from longevity to immortality through a study of the ancient Chinese pharmaceutical-botanical search for macrobiotic plants and the pharmaceutical-mineralogical use of inorganic substances in therapy. The desire for longevity was supplanted by a desire for immortality as evidenced by the use of metallurgic-chemical processes

to transform base metal into an elixir of gold that would result in immortality when ingested. Through his studies of alchemy, Needham concludes that not only Chinese but also all alchemical practices arose from a desire to achieve longevity that developed into the goal of all alchemical endeavors, immortality.

Because the ancient Chinese considered the time-scales of Nature to be variable, the desire for immortality was not contrary to the Taoist concept of wu wei, "no action contrary to Nature" (Needham, 1974, p. 93). The alchemical practices to prolong life provided the time necessary to transform the body. The resulting deathless being either remained on earth or ascended to the ouranic regions, the Chien. Therefore, each person has an individual responsibility to prepare for death. This responsibility came to be more and more insisted on by the adherents of spiritual alchemy.

Spiritual immortality and the Pa'o p'u tzu. To be immortal is to be exempt from death, a universal concept that evolved from an ageless tradition, "part of a primitive ideology going far beyond the confines of China" (Eliade, 1956/1962, p. 111). By the 4th to 3rd centuries BCE, the desire for longevity had been replaced with a belief in immortality. Records show that Li Shao-Chun, a thaumaturgical alchemist, described by Needham (1980) as "the first in any civilisation to associate artificial gold with immortality" (p. 330) attempted to transform cinnabar into gold in 133 BCE. Although the transformed cinnabar was not ingested in this case (it was made into crockery), Li's record speaks of the very early metallurgical attempts to transform metal into gold for the purpose of

achieving immortality. Not long after this, in the time of the Ch'in (221-201 BCE) and Han dynasties, the belief in immortality had become the center of social and intellectual life among the Chinese court and nobility. According to Eliade (1956/1962), Needham (1974), and Wong (1997b), Chinese alchemy developed along with mystical Taoism in an environment of peace and prosperity that encouraged the growth of religions.

The Pa'o p'u tzu, attributed to Ko Hung (circa 280-342 CE), includes material on the alchemical goal, immortality. Ko Hung differentiates between three different kinds of immortals that reflect the development from a desire to prolong life on earth to a desire for immortality. According to Needham (1974) and Robinet (1992/1997), Ko Hung identifies the ti hsien as an Earthly Immortal, purified, ethereal and free. The ti hsien is "able to spend the rest of eternity wandering as a kind of wraith" (Needham, 1974, p. 11) and enjoys the beauties of the earth and the company of similar enlightened spirits. Heavenly Immortals (t'ien hsien) ascended after having preserved their physical integrity and purified and aerated their bodies as a perfected immortal, to the invisible hierarchal structure of the universe. In addition, there are immortals who take up residence in Kunlun, the magic mountain representing the axis mundi (world axis).

Although Ko Hung's discussion of immortality does not provide a "methodical presentation of the techniques" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 78), he does write about immortality as a state of consciousness that is spiritual rather than a state of deathless being. According to Blofeld (1978), Ko Hung "firmly insists

that the subject of obtaining immortality is altogether misunderstood by many so-called Taoists, that immortality is a spiritual state to be won only by the spiritually perceptive" (p. 33). Ko Hung's position attests to a very early realization that external elixirs were insufficient to attain immortality. He writes "with guidance on the use of herbs you may achieve longevity, but still you will have to die; only imbibe the holy elixir and your present body will become immortal, lasting as long as heaven and earth" (pp. 121-122). "Imbibe holy elixir" is a reference to the alchemical task.

As Sivin (1968), a scholar of Chinese alchemy notes, only two chapters of the P'ao p'u tzu are devoted solely to alchemy, but this text is important to a study of Chinese alchemy because its underlying message is immortality. Wong (1997b) describes this text as an encyclopedia that lists "formulas, lists of ingredients, procedures for making the external pill, advice on stilling the mind and minimizing desire, methods of calisthenics and breath control, and ideas about holding the One" (p. 72). To achieve immortality, Ko Hung believed that one must first have faith and, second, a vocation for the effort. It was also necessary to find a competent master although the individual himself had the only means to achieve immortality. These beliefs have continued through the succeeding centuries and are basic to Complete Reality Taoism.

External and Internal Alchemy and Complete Reality Taoism

From the roots of the desire for immortality grew the introspective practices of spiritual alchemy. In the following discussion, the differences

between external and internal alchemy are identified as well as descriptions of the internal process. In alchemy, the practices to attain immortality developed into two distinct branches: external, or wai-tan, and internal, or nei-tan. The practice of external alchemy is based on the belief that the life force of humans is identical to cosmic energy and a loss of this energy would result in illness or death. Practitioners attempt to produce a pill through the transformation of minerals or herbs into gold or cinnabar. The ingestion of these chemical substances would regenerate cosmic energy so that the adept would eventually be able to attain immortality.

External alchemy reached its height of development in the 7th and 8th centuries CE and declined during the succeeding two centuries. The decline of external alchemy is a result of the failure to manufacture or transmute materials into the gold elixir. As external alchemy declined, interior alchemy achieved its golden age during the Sung (960-1279) and Yuan (1279-1368) dynasties. In internal alchemy or nei-tan (inner cinnabar), practitioners work to develop an immortal soul through the regeneration of the three life energies, ch'i, ching, and shen. Internal alchemy uses meditative processes to regenerate these three energies. However, Blofeld (1978) finds that external and internal alchemical practices are frequently integrated: the practitioner may "ingest alchemically compounded drugs as a subsidiary means of purifying and transmuting his being, but recognise such aids to be of small account in comparison with spiritual cultivation" (p. 115). For Kohn (1992), internal alchemy practices hardly differ

from external alchemy: being nourished on the pure energy of five sprouts or being nourished on visualized energy. The close relationship between external and internal alchemy continues to the present because the language of the former is used to teach the techniques and processes of the latter.

Kohn finds that internal and external alchemy practices are similar whereas Needham (1983) argues that internal alchemy evolved from external alchemy. Needham bifurcates the development of Chinese alchemy into Chinese metallurgical attempts that are proto-chemical and alchemical attempts that are proto-endocrinological. The proto-endocrinological attempts were superseded by a "physiological alchemy that dealt with the fluids and tissues of the human body itself, and [the alchemists] sought to construct from their interactions a medicine of immortality. The elixir gave place more and more to the enchymoma" (p. 301). Needham prefers to see Chinese alchemy as a physical science rather than as a religion. He concludes that Chinese alchemy, after the Sung period, developed into endocrinology through the alchemists' interest in urinary steroid preparations. Needham is staunch in this position and faults Jung for neglecting the scientific offerings of the proto-chemists. His claims are not surprising considering that his biochemical perspective of Chinese alchemy negates the spiritual component. His position, nevertheless, describes how Chinese alchemy has its roots, as does the belief in immortality, in the desire to prolong life.

Needham's findings on the development of Chinese alchemy highlight the focus on the body due to the desire for physical immortality. This interest was integrated with psychic practices resulting in the cultivation of body and mind. The practices to obtain physical immortality include dietary regimen as well as physiological and visionary exercises. By the time of the Sung Dynasty, the period when Chang (1987) wrote Understanding Reality, these physical practices had been united with the psychic practices of spiritual immortality. Internal alchemists had long abandoned the belief in physical immortality and Blofeld (1978), Cleary (Chang, 1987), and Wong (Liu, 1794/1998) describe the process to attain spiritual immortality as the cultivation of body and mind. The cultivation of body and mind enables the spirit to be released from the body thereby achieving celestial immortality. As Liu (Chang, 1987) states, "only celestial immortals shed the illusory body and achieve the spiritual body" (p. 29). Later, the followers of Wang Che (1123-70) continue the idea of the release of the spirit from the body in the process of reunification with the Tao. The practice of internal alchemy continues to the present as a spiritual process of inner transformation through a simultaneous cultivation of body and mind that may include meditation, calisthenics, and yogic postures.

As mentioned previously, the introspective practices of internal alchemy employ the language of external alchemy in its teachings. An example is the use of metals in internal alchemy: cinnabar (tan) is said to be transformed into mercury to "reproduce the cyclical alternations of yin and yang" (Schipper,

1982/1993, p. 8) in the development of the immortal soul. The use of external alchemical language in internal alchemical texts can be traced to the enduring influence of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu who are frequently cited in internal alchemical texts. According to Robinet (1992/1997), the works of these two ancient figures are the foundation of a language based on images that "allows the faithful to emerge from the 'chaotic' state of symbiosis with the world and define their place within it before transcending it" (p. 259). The imagery of Taoism provides for a liturgy and meditative practices that reveals a map of the world that "is in itself a theory, an ontology, and an epistemology, a whole grouping of propositions" (p. 259).

This review of ancient Chinese text emphasizes the significance of the foundation of Chinese alchemy, the Taoist cosmogony. Although the different forms of Taoism originate from ancient mystical practices and philosophical Taoism, Robinet (1992/1997) identifies three essential elements that differentiate inner alchemy from other forms of Taoism: (1) a concern for training, both mental and physiological, with the mental aspect tending to predominate; (2) metaphorical references to chemical practices; (3) a synthesizing tendency bringing together various Taoist elements such as breathing and visualization exercises, Buddhist speculations and methods, and references to Confucian texts. Despite the synthesis of the three teachings, the foundation of the Taoist cosmos is evident and remains the foundation for internal alchemy.

Alchemical texts, presented as essays, poems, and teachings by various masters transmitted in the form of disciple's notes, provide information about the transformation of the body and mind from a mundane state to "one that mirrors the timeless and permanent reality of the Tao" (Wong, 1997a, p. 1). This process is "an act of recreation" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 219) that allows the practitioner to return to the Tao and to become harmonious with the vital spirit of the Way. Although the preceding review focused on the Taoist world-view and alchemical thought, it did not include descriptions of the alchemical practices. Despite a dearth of concrete descriptions of the alchemical process in alchemical texts, Blofeld and Robinet tell us of the physical and psychic actions of the practitioner in the following discussion. It is likely that specific descriptions of each alchemical step are not provided because alchemical masters believe that each specific method must be tailored to the individual and taught only by expert personal instruction.

Both Blofeld and Robinet contribute a glimpse into the alchemic process. Blofeld (1978) suggests that there is a preparatory stage where the practitioner seeks harmony with nature before the major undertaking. The seeker of immortality then works to refine mundane delusions "until nought remains save pure spirit but slightly hampered by a fleshy envelope that, whenever death comes, will be discarded" (p. 15). The task, according to Blofeld, is "a dazzling prize demanding unremitting effort" (p. 14).

Robinet (1992/1997) includes a more detailed description of the process of maintaining a relationship with the Tao. The Taoist works to return to the point of Origin through introspection and contemplation. Upon reaching this point, "the Taoist builds a systematic whole, according to the comprehensive relational scheme provided by Yin and Yang and the Five Agents, a miniaturized world that provides him with an exemplar and exploratory world" (p. 16). Once this world is created, the Taoist places himself in the center. The recreative process begins with a conscious effort through contemplation. "By locating himself in a correctly aligned geometric schema that represents that cosmos as a sort of mandala, he finally identifies himself correctly and ritually in relationship to the axis of the world" (p. 17). In the return to the Tao, the Taoist

> must impose order on the world to reconcile it to himself and to reconcile himself with himself. Once he has done this, he can rediscover the Prime Mover that resides within all things, within himself, in the world and beyond. As he returns to the Prime Mover, he can understand and integrate the entire universe coherently. (pp. 17-18)

Blofeld's description includes the physical preparations for the practice of internal alchemy whereas Robinet's description underscores the introspective nature of this practice.

The lack of concrete information about the alchemical process may also be related to the Taoist view of language. Both Cleary (Chang, 1987) and Robinet (1992/1997) note the necessity of commenting on the use of language in internal

alchemy. Cleary's discussion of the Taoist view of language suggests that language is a two-edged sword. Language, like consciousness, is a necessary vehicle and essential to our existence. Like a consciousness that becomes rigid through habitual, rather than creative reasoning, the use of language may debilitate our whole existence by the rigidity of fixed labels and categories that restrict our minds. In this situation, conditioning blocks the absorption of information and stands as a barrier to understanding.

Robinet (1992/1997) provides an insightful discussion about the language of internal alchemy based on the writings of Wang Pi (226-49 CE) who is known for his commentaries on the I-Ching and the Tao-te ching. Robinet acknowledges Wang's statement about the use of symbols synthesized from the I-Ching and the thought of Chuang-tzu: "xiang (symbols) lead to the idea, but once the idea has been reached, the symbols must be abandoned" (p. 230). Internal alchemical masters, keeping this teaching in mind, worked to create new forms of language. The creation of new forms of language parallels the re-creation of the practitioner: "a new language imposes the creation of new images, new relationship and a new man" (p. 230). By breaking out of the prison created by the habitual use of language, practitioners free themselves from accepting the existing consciousness and thus discover new perspectives.

For Robinet (1992/1997), "words or images are only markers or reference points" (p. 230) and the alchemists, "in good Chinese fashion . . . use the language primarily to reveal the relationships that exist among words, the spaces between

words or images" (p. 230). Although the lexicon of alchemical language is extensive, Robinet emphasizes that these terms are tools and that is "why no meaning can be given for a term except in a specific context" (p. 231):

> The meaning that they carry in each setting is the important thing, but this tends to destabilize them since meaning is necessarily polyvalent and the system consists of inviting the adept to hold onto this polyvalence and all of its ramifications. (p. 231)

Robinet's discussion is reminiscent of Ricoeur's (1981) perspective of the polysemic quality of words in the interpretation of texts. For Ricoeur, a French philosopher, the interpretation of texts also includes reaching "the subjectivity of the one who speaks, the language being forgotten" (p. 47). Robinet's and Ricoeur's statements reflect the necessity for a flexible consciousness, that is, keeping an open mind.

This review of the six ancient Chinese texts (I Ching, Tao-te ching, Chuang-tzu, Huai-nan-tzu, Ts'an-tung-ch'i, and Pa'o p'u tzu) identifies beliefs that have been perpetuated in Chang Po-tuan's (1987) Understanding Reality. Tracing the history of the ancient texts highlights the development of these roots into alchemical practices to achieve spiritual immortality, the goal of Complete Reality Taoism. The foundation of spiritual immortality is the Taoist world-view that the Tao is the source of the universe. From this source, the Primordial Breath separated and permeates the universe as a vital energy. Through observations of nature, Taoists believe that the laws and doctrines of nature are

also applicable to humankind. Humans can therefore be transmuted to a state of purity, an experience of immortality. This transmutation process, described as the refining of the Three Treasures, is known in Complete Reality Taoism as the three phases of yin and yang.

Complete Reality Taoism and Understanding Reality

The following discussion will present the history of Complete Reality Taoism and will also include a comparison of Complete Reality Taoism, considered as part of the Southern School of Taoism, with the practices of the Northern School of Taoism. This discussion will not only define the place that Complete Reality Taoism holds in the Taoist religion after Chang's death but also familiarize the reader with the lexicon and practices of this school of Taoism. The background of Chang Po-tuan will be presented before a discussion of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process as propounded in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). The following discussion will also point out differences in depth-psychological interpretations and Cleary's interpretations of Chinese alchemy.

Chang Po-tuan's pre-eminent predecessor in the attainment of spiritual immortality is Lu Tung-pin, one of the famous eight immortals who is considered as a deity by religious Taoists. According to Cleary (1991a), Fischer-Schreiber (1986/1996), and Wong (1997b), Lu is one of the grand patriarchs of internal alchemy and is credited for transforming the methods of external alchemy into those of internal alchemy. To this day, images of Lu frequently

include the T'ai-chi mandala on his clothing. He is believed to have lived during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 BCE) and transmitted his teachings to students who became renowned during the Sung dynasty.

Although Chang died before his successors institutionalized Complete Reality Taoism, one of Lu's students, Wang Chu'ng-yang (1112-70), is one of four patriarchs of the Complete Reality School of Taoism that became a distinct movement between the 11th and 13th centuries. Wang is "one of the first Taoists to integrate Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism explicitly" (Wong, 1997b, p. 77). This integration is known as chuan-chen tao, the Way of Realization of Truth. According to Fischer-Schreiber (1986/1996), Wang "combines the teachings of the Prajnaparamita sutra with those of the Inner Elixir School [nei-tan]" (p. 24) and taught his followers that mundanity results in barriers that prevent the spark of the Tao from developing within themselves. In order to return to the original mind of the Tao, stabilization of consciousness is necessary.

Two movements developed from Wang's synthesis that became distinct during the 12th century: the Northern School and the Southern School. One of Wang's followers, Ch'iu Ch'u-chi, founded the Lung-men School (Dragon Gate), also known as the Northern School. The Northern School engendered The Secret of the Golden Flower, one of its best known texts (which, as we know, was produced on wood blocks in the 17th century). The Northern School established congregations whereas the five known patriarchs, including Chang, of the Southern School had no contact with "a center of power" (Robinet, 1992/1997,

p. 224), but instead, "wandered around the country" (p. 224). In the South, separated politically from the North after 1127, internal alchemy continued as a separate but parallel development.

Despite the schism caused by the political climate, the Northern and Southern schools of Taoism continued internal and external alchemical practices. The primary difference between the two schools is the use of sexual yoga and the so-called waterwheel exercises by the Southern School. The waterwheel is known as the Microcosmic Orbit that moves the internal energy (waters of life) through introspection. The Northern school stressed silent meditation and did not make references to the use of sexual exercises. The differences between the two schools may not be as pronounced as this historical division suggests. First, it should be noted that Chang (1987) warns against the use of sexual yoga in Understanding Reality. Secondly, Robinet (1992/1997) cautions that references to the Northern and Southern schools have varied meanings and instead "have no precise meaning except in context" (p. 216). She believes that the contradictions of modern historians render the differences between the two schools "open to doubt and ultimately of little relevance" (p. 226).

Chang Po-tuan, one of the patriarchs of the Southern School of Taoism, was born into a family of Confucian scholars. He followed the family tradition of scholarship but turned to esoteric studies after repeatedly failing civil service examinations. According to Cleary (Chang, 1987) and Kohn (1993), Chang was a military advisor to a high official of the Sung Dynasty and was widely read in

such secular subjects as law, mathematics, medicine, military science, astronomy, and geography. He studied Buddhism in depth and "according to one source, he experienced an awakening while studying Buddhist literature, but as his attainment of 'the Tao of unification with the fundamental' was still incomplete, he continued to travel in search of enlightenment" (Chang, 1987, p. 1).

By the time Chang's pursuit of alchemical studies began, psycho-physiological exercises had replaced the laboratory work with minerals, metals, and drugs in alchemical practices. Chang met Liu Ts'ao, a Taoist monk in 1069. Liu is said to have learned the Taoist secrets of the restoration of vitality and energy from Chung-li Ch'uan but he is also considered to be a disciple of Lu Tung-pin, referred to earlier as Ancestor Lu. After completing the alchemical process successfully, Chang became a teacher in his own right. Near the end of his life he composed Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) and entrusted the work to a patron with the following request: "All I have learned in my life is herein . . . . Circulate it, and someday there will be those who arrive at the way through this book" (Chang, 1987, p. 2). Kohn (1993) dates the preface to 1075 and the postface to 1078.

Not only is Chang considered to have been the foremost authority of internal alchemy during the Sung Dynasty (960-1279), a period of great renaissance, but his text is also considered to be a source for many later alchemical studies. Chang completed three texts, Four Hundred Words on the Gold Elixir, an originally untitled work, Understanding Reality, and the third,

which Needham (1976) translates as The Green-and-Elegant Secret Papers in the Jade-Purity Golden Box on the Essentials of the Internal Refining of the Enchymoma, the Golden Treasure. According to Needham (1983), Chang wrote Understanding Reality about 10 years after completing Four Hundred Words on the Gold Elixir which outlines the entire alchemical process in 20 short verses. Cleary (Chang, 1986) translates this text under the title The Inner Teachings of Taoism. Understanding Reality is an expansion of this earlier work and contains 99 stanzas. It is the object of many commentaries and citations for it is believed to contain the complete exposition of the alchemical procedure.

Despite the inclusion of sexual yoga in the Southern school with its practices of physical and physiological exercise, Complete Reality Taoism as taught by Chang emphasizes spiritual enlightenment. According to Cleary (Chang, 1987), Chang subordinated all other forms of cultivating the mind and body including visualization exercises and advocated for a form of meditation that stressed serenity. Chang follows Lu (1991), who warns that

> visualization of phenomena in inward gazing while sitting forgetting is indispensable. Unfortunately, ignorant people of little learning who don't understand the process expect visualization to accomplish the work, and they form the alchemical elixir in their minds and cull the medicine in their imaginations. (p. xxii)

Instead, Complete Reality Taoism emphasizes the practice of emptying the mind. This practice is used to observe events without subjective distortion and to

achieve states of consciousness that "usher the mind into another form of consciousness in which elementals (such as elemental vitality, energy, and spirit) are perceived by an inner sense" (p. xxiii).

For Cleary (Chang, 1987), the Complete Reality Taoism school distinguishes between ordinary consciousness and the mind of Tao. Cleary claims that the mind of Tao represents real knowledge, or nondiscursive, immediate knowing, and is considered to be a part of the energy of the universe. It is a consciousness existing in humans before birth and is not the product of learning. In humans, real knowledge is covered over by ordinary consciousness after birth. Ordinary consciousness, or conscious knowledge, refers to the human mind and is our everyday awareness formed by training and experience of ordinary life. Conditioning is "the suffocation of the organic living potential of the individual and the community" (Chang, 1987, p. 5). Mundanity, or conditioning, is not considered to be evil, but it should be considered a servant rather than the master of consciousness. In this way, the mind of Tao, a celestial consciousness, can guide earthly consciousness.

According to Cleary, (Chang, 1987), Chang's instruction for the alchemical process addresses the attainment of a spiritual consciousness--that is, when ordinary consciousness has been refined to a consciousness that is, in Cleary's (1991b) words, a mode of awareness "subtler or more direct than thought or imagination" (p. 1). The achievement of a spiritual consciousness reverses the

degeneration of humankind from its original state of purity. As Cleary states, degeneration

> is characterized by a "downward" regression of thought into aggression and greed--mundane manifestations of spirit, energy, and vitality. Complete Reality praxis attempts to reverse this regression, channeling vitality and energy "upward" to boost consciousness. (p. 11)

Although Cleary is referring to levels of consciousness, his description of the Complete Reality practice includes a dual movement, the descent from and ascent to the Tao. This motif, introduced earlier in the discussion of the Taoist cosmos, is evidence of the perpetuation of the Taoist cosmological world-view through the millennia and in translations of Chinese alchemy. The dual movement is also found in the Western alchemical process of circulatio such as in the repeated ascents and descents of the planetary spheres and the heating of alchemical ingredients in a reflux flask. In addition, circulatio plays an important role in the methodology of this paper that will be addressed after this literature review.

Cleary's discussion of degeneration in the Complete Reality Taoism process demonstrates the ability of the underlying Taoist cosmic theme, a dual movement, to persist in Cleary's translation from Chinese into English despite his practice of reducing alchemical symbolism to states of consciousness. This objective is clearly stated by Cleary (1991b): his intent is to refine the Chinese "principles into pragmatic observations divested of the outward forms of

religious and alchemical symbolism" (p. 6). An examination of Cleary's introduction to his translation of The Secret of the Golden Flower finds no mention of alchemical images. Cleary, instead, describes the text as "a lay manual of Buddhist and Taoist methods for clarifying the mind" (p. 1). He describes the Taoist alchemical goal as follows:

> In Taoist terms, the first goal of the Way is to restore the original God-given spirit and become a self-realized human being. In Buddhist terms, a realized human being is someone conscious of the original mind, or the real self, as it is in its spontaneous state, independent of environmental conditioning. (p. 1)

For Cleary, "the goal of the Way" to a consciousness of the original mind can be attained through the meditative process.

In his introduction to Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987), Cleary claims that the basic elements of Taoist thought, yin and yang, essence and life, the Five Phases, and the I Ching signs, are levels of awareness. Although he provides background on the main points of the alchemical process that is helpful in understanding the process, Cleary's focus on the differences between the human mind and the mind of Tao or conscious knowledge and real knowledge ignores the underlying meanings of the alchemical symbols. His practice of reducing alchemical metaphors in the text to states of consciousness and demystifying alchemical images is of such significant concern to Odajnyk (1993) that he devotes an appendix to this topic in his study of meditation.

Odajnyk (1993) contends that Cleary's interpretations of The Secret of the Golden Flower tends "to underplay the alchemical aspects of the book, and in spite of his claims of familiarity with Taoist alchemy, when alchemical motifs appear he does not fully understand them" (p. 194). Odajnyk also asserts that Cleary "interprets the text in primarily Taoist terms and does not explain its alchemical meaning" (p. 194) but "treats the alchemical images in the Golden Flower as metaphors for different states of consciousness" (p. 199). On the basis of Odajnyk's conclusions, it can be said that Cleary made similar interpretations in Understanding Reality.

Odajnyk's concern that Cleary's interpretations are excessively reductive is part of the on-going dialogue between depth psychology and Chinese alchemy. The following discussion will look at the depth-psychological approach to Chinese alchemy and show that the Taoist cosmos remains the underlying foundation of Chang's text despite translations and interpretations, because alchemical texts are documents of the collective unconscious. The images that arise from the collected unconscious are imprinted on the symbolic language of alchemical texts.

A Depth-psychological Approach to Understanding Reality

Depth-psychologists such as von Franz (1980) consider alchemical texts as documents of the collective unconscious. She explains how alchemical metaphors are expressions of the collective unconscious. Alchemical texts are the written observations of early alchemists who

> worked without any conscious religion or scientific program, so that their conclusions are spontaneous, uncorrected impressions of the unconscious with very little conscious interference, in contrast to other symbolic material which had always been revised. (p. 40)

The alchemists "were studying unknown phenomena of matter . . . and they just observed what came up and interpreted that somehow, without any specific plan" (p. 21). These observations comprise a symbolic language, a language of images.

Because alchemical content is expressed in a symbolic language, depth psychologists interpret alchemical material in a manner similar to the interpretation of dream images. Mentioned above in the discussion of depth-psychological studies of Western alchemy, this is a process that amplifies the symbols so that their many associations uncover a wealth of meanings. The roots of these meanings are primordial images and, because they are collective contents, transcend the individual personality. Thus, the symbols can be signposts that point not only to the primitive order of human society but also to the structure of the psyche. A reductive interpretation misses this opportunity of discovery.

Examples of reductive interpretations include Cleary's (1991b) conclusion that <u>The Secret of the Golden Flower</u> provides exercises as a way of "clearing of consciousness and freeing awareness" (p. 140) and that <u>Understanding Reality</u> describes how one becomes a complete human. As Odajnyk (1993) states,

Cleary's focus on removing the outward forms of alchemy and getting to "the heart of reality in itself by direct experience and direct perception" (p. 137) undervalues the symbolic content and is "an example of the type of treatment that Jung felt Eastern religious traditions would suffer at the hands of Westerners. This is Zen without Buddhism, Tao without Taoism" (p. 201). Marlan (1999), a Jungian analyst, agrees with Odajnyk. He argues that Cleary's interpretation

> loses the metaphoric and difficult alchemical dimension of the text or translates these into a more rationalized psychology. It leaves out the unconscious and in its clear light, it purges the text of its mystery and soul, leaving us with a Secret of the Golden Flower without a secret. (p. 9)

Cleary's interpretations are discordant with the depth-psychological perspective of alchemical metaphors. Cleary's attempt to demystify the alchemical metaphors obliterates elements important to Taoism, its religious and mystical qualities. Marlan's and Odajnyk's views of Cleary's interpretations represent the depth-psychological position that a study of alchemy should consider the unconscious as well as the conscious aspects of the metaphors.

The difference between Cleary's reductive interpretation of the process entailed in The Secret of the Golden Flower and the depth-psychological views of Jung and his followers is important: it is a constitutive part of the history of the on-going relationship between depth psychology and Chinese alchemy.

However, the question still arises: is Cleary's translation of Understanding Reality appropriate for a depth-psychological study of Chinese alchemy? After all, one of the primary reasons for Cleary's translation of the Secret of the Golden Flower is his concern that the Wilhelm-Baynes translation is misleading. Cleary asserts that both Wilhelm's translation and Jung's commentary are based on "a garbled translation of a truncated version of a corrupted recension of the original work" (p. 3), thus rendering it dysfunctional. Not only did Wilhelm translate a corrupted text, but Cleary also believes that Wilhelm was not versed in Chan Buddhist thought and, consequently repeatedly translated passages that gave "the very opposite" (p. 75) information.

An example of Wilhelm's misinterpretation, according to Cleary (1991b), is found at the very beginning of the Chinese text. Cleary objects to Wilhelm's (1962) translation that in the meditative process, "one must not wish to leap over everything and penetrate directly" (p. 21). Cleary insists that the text should be translated in the following way: "there are very many alchemical teachings, but all of them make temporary use of effort to arrive at effortlessness; they are not teachings of total transcendence and direct penetration" (p. 10). For Cleary, "the passage describes the distinctive nature of the text as representing a sudden enlightenment teaching, in contrast to the gradual teachings of ordinary Taoist works on spiritual alchemy" (p. 75). This passage "identifies the Chan Buddhist influence behind the Taoist facade of the text" (p. 75) that was missed by Wilhelm.

Regardless of his ability to correct Wilhelm's translation, Cleary still ignores psyche's images, products of the unconscious. As such, these are objective descriptions of the psychic processes in alchemy and are universal. The universality of psyche's images is evidenced in Jung's many alchemical studies that are themselves studies of translated alchemical texts. The many translations of alchemical texts have contributed and will continue to advance our understanding of psychic processes. While the debate between Cleary's reductive interpretations and depth-psychological interpretations continues, psyche's images remain intact and relevant in Wilhelm's (1962) translation of The Secret of the Golden Flower, as in Cleary's translation. Cleary's translation of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) is not an interpretation of the alchemical process nor of the alchemical metaphors. Cleary is a respected translator of Taoist texts, and so the images that are present in Chang's metaphors can be expected to be as intact and objective as the symbols in his translation of The Secret of the Golden Flower. This study of Complete Reality Taoism will be based on his translation (and not his interpretations) and will focus on the symbols in Understanding Reality with an approach that will honor the mysticism and religiosity that are the roots of Taoism.

In summary, this literature review documents the relationship between Chinese alchemy and depth psychology that began with Jung's first study of alchemy, The Secret of the Golden Flower. The history continues in Moore's study of the Tao in which she finds that the Tao is an archetype of wholeness, as

is the Self. As noted above, Jung's study of The Secret of the Golden Flower contributed to his discovery of the Self. The relationship between depth psychology and Chinese alchemy continues in Odajnyk's study of meditation. The literature review then shifts, as did Jung, from Chinese alchemy to Western alchemy and focuses on two authors, Hitchcock and Silberer. Both authors recognized the psychological nature of alchemy before Jung did. Also included are the studies of Burckhardt and Eliade that support the view that alchemy is more than an attempt to transform base metals into gold. Depth-psychological studies of alchemy by Schwartz-Salant, von Franz, and Edinger follow and are reviewed before Jung's Western alchemical studies because their studies help to introduce a subject that can be overwhelming to readers.

The studies of Jung's followers lay the foundation for a review of Jung's alchemical studies from which are found interpretations of alchemical symbolism that have correspondences with the teachings of Complete Reality Taoism. A significant correspondence is Jung's description of the state of ego-consciousness and Cleary's description of conditioned consciousness in Complete Reality Taoism. In addition, the recurring themes of tri-unities and myths of creation are found in Taoism and Jung's alchemical studies. An example is Jung's (1944/1968) conclusion about the creation of consciousness: "as soon as the unconscious begins to manifest itself they [the opposites] split asunder, as at the Creation; for every act of dawning consciousness is a creative act, and it is from this psychological experience that all our cosmogonic symbols are derived"

(p. 25). His finding parallels the Taoist cosmos wherein the act of separating from the Tao is also an act that creates the "other," or consciousness.

In addition to following the relationship between Chinese alchemy and depth psychology, this literature review also introduces Complete Reality Taoism and provides a summary of its place in the history of both Taoist religion and internal alchemy. The review of the roots of Taoism highlights the foundations of mysticism and philosophical Taoism that have endured in Complete Reality Taoism. This foundation is exemplified in the Taoist world-view that holds mind and body in wholeness and in the unity of the macrocosm and microcosm. The literature review also focuses on how this world-view incorporates the components of the Taoist cosmos and the laws of nature through the actions of the Three Treasures, ching, ch'i, and shen, and the Five Phases, Wood, Metal, Fire, Water, and Earth. Both of these doctrines as well as the I Ching trigrams describe the workings of a universe that is governed by a changing equilibrium and supported by the permanency of the Tao, the source of the universe.

The review of Taoist texts also identifies an affinity between depth psychology and Complete Reality Taoism for the review not only began with the first meeting of depth psychology and Chinese alchemy but also ends with an expanded relationship, the inclusion of Complete Reality Taoism. The addition of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) to the relationship is based on the similarities between The Secret of the Golden Flower and Understanding Reality:

a common ancestor, Ancestor Lu; both are an amalgamation of Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism; and both are texts on spiritual alchemy. The relationship between The Secret of the Golden Flower and Understanding Reality will be strengthened with this study of Understanding Reality for it is undertaken to enrich Jung's (1957/1967) commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower.

Although Jung's (1957/1967) commentary introduces Chinese alchemy to Western readers, it is not a comprehensive study. This conclusion is based on the following reasons: (1) Jung expresses concern about Westerners undertaking the Chinese practice without proper preparations and admittedly does not present the details of the alchemical procedure. (2) Jung does not explore the Taoist cosmogony with the attention it merits. (3) Odajnyk and Cleary agree that Jung's knowledge of Taoism was limited at the time of his study. Jung's commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower is an exploratory rather than a comprehensive study of Chinese alchemy.

Statement of the Problem

It can be claimed that Jung, the father of depth psychology, lacked the requisite knowledge of Chinese alchemy and its Taoist conceptions to properly interpret the significance of The Secret of the Golden Flower--although he did attempt to write an introductory commentary on it. Due to the fact that alchemy and Taoism developed concurrently in China, taking seed during its pre-history

and flowering during the Han (206 BCE-220 CE), there cannot be a comprehensive understanding of alchemy without an account of the Taoist cosmogony and its accompanying world-view of constant change, dynamically balanced opposites, and the cycling of vital energy throughout the entire universe. Although Jung did not have access to the yet untranslated Understanding Reality, I plan to show the significance of this text not only for Jung's study of Chinese alchemy, but also for furthering general knowledge of the alchemical process of transforming unconscious material of psyche into accessible conscious form. This exploration of Complete Reality Taoism as expounded in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) will integrate the ancient knowledge of China and the doctrines describing the Taoist cosmos with a depth-psychological approach to the alchemical symbols in Chang's text.

In depth psychology, alchemical treatises are considered as documents arising from the unconscious. As a document from the unconscious, the alchemical images in Understanding Reality are based on archetypal motifs and can be studied in the same manner that matter can be studied. The symbols in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) are not only symbols of wholeness as materials from the unconscious but are also symbols that reflect the ancient mystical and philosophical thought of China. As Jung (1957/1967) points out, there is a primary difference between the holistic, balanced world-view of the Chinese and the dualism of the West that separated mind and body and resulted in the complete domination of the intellect in Western thought and culture.

Thus, the West has "lost itself in a one-sided over-development and over-valuation of a single psychic function (p. 9), whereas China, in holding its balance of opposites, represents higher culture and development.

To explain the split in the conditioned, cultural development of the West, Jungian and archetypal psychologists point to the development of Christianity. Hillman (1979) considers 787 CE as the beginning of the long history of the triumph of the intellect and the loss of the soul. It was at this point that the Catholic Church began banning images that were beyond the aegis of the Church: the beginning of the West's deprivation of the "inherent authenticity of images (p. 54). Earlier dates have been cited, 325 CE, for example, that mark the "war on symbolic language" (Silberer, 1914/1971, p. 184) that began with the sanctioning of all language not in line with church dogma. Furthermore, the Christian doctrines of the immutability of God have not only influenced Western alchemical texts, but also all of Western thought, including scientific discourse. Because the "divinity is unchanging, there must be no internal contradictions in God, or new ideas or conceptions" (von Franz, 1980, p. 33). This emphasis on permanence and rationality stands in sharp contrast to the basic tenets of Chinese thought and alchemy--based, in part, on Taoist principles of constant flux and change.

Although these differences are evident, von Franz (1980) claims that these sharp distinctions are most clearly visible in traditional symbolism--such as that found in organized religion. Because organized religions have selected, revised,

and discarded material to fit into traditional interpretations, documentation of mystical experiences that contain metaphors or images from the collective unconscious have been edited. In short, religious material ordinarily has been "rationalized and purged of the scurrilities of the unconscious" (p. 16). An example, found in this paper's "own backyard" so to speak, is Cleary's (1991b) interpretations that reduce the alchemical text to the "essence of Chan [Buddhism]" (p. 137) and neglect the many layers of meaning lying beneath the surface of the text.

Another account of the suppression of the unconscious is von Franz's (1980) description of the Catholic Church's practice of "expurgating what was considered to be personal material" (p. 16) (such as dreams and experiences of fantasy material) from the histories of their saints. Compared to traditional texts and symbolism, alchemical material is more spontaneous and includes "an astonishing amount of material from the unconscious, produced in a situation where the conscious mind did not follow a definite program" (p. 22). This is not to say that alchemy is totally divorced from its cultural surroundings, but that it is more objective, that is, more like the primordial state, in its manifestation of the collective unconscious. In this sense, alchemy and its archetypal, unconscious foundations can be employed to analyze the collective unconscious of modern people as well--which has obvious import to depth psychologists today.

Because Western alchemy has been affected by an excessively intellectualized cultural, religious, and scientific framework, Jung (1957/1967) acknowledges that Chinese alchemy offers a broader perspective on the transformation of unconscious content to consciousness because it has never tried to sever itself from the "paradoxicality and polarity of all life" (p. 9). The Chinese perspective is immanent in Taoist alchemical metaphors whose richness encourages us to understand their symbolism rather than purging Taoism's antecedents of mysticism and philosophy from the meaning of the text. With the belief of the Tao, rather than an eternal, immutable God, as the source of the universe, Chinese alchemy is based on a world-view constituted by the waxing and waning relationships between the macrocosm of the universe and microcosm of humans. Moreover, humans are mediators between Heaven and Earth and have a responsibility to participate in the continuing process of creating and recreating the universe. Through the inner alchemical process, humans can cultivate both mind and body to a state of self-realization with the aim of "recovering the primordial vapor of the Tao and liberating it at death" (Liu, 1794/1998, p. 20). Death, then, is seen not as something from which we must flee, but rather as a goal for which we must prepare. The alchemical process of reversing our conditioned state to a spiritual state guides us in this life and helps us to prepare ourselves for death.

Although the goal of all alchemical processes is the attainment of spiritual immortality through the proper preparation for bodily death, von Franz (1980)

points out two other purposes of alchemical study: the union of mind and matter and insight into the psyche of modern people. This study is intended to draw out these purposes though an exploration of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987), a precursor to The Secret of the Golden Flower. Because Jung did not have sufficient knowledge of Chinese alchemy and the Taoist perspective of their cosmos, his conclusions regarding the connection between Chinese thought and depth psychology, the parallel between the Chinese process and the psychic development of individuals, are in need of revision. Therefore, the purpose of this project is to undertake a thorough study of Chinese alchemy, by means of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process expounded in Understanding Reality, in order to attain a deeper understanding of the transformation of unconscious content to conscious attention and thus supplement Jung's and depth psychology's work in this area.

Methodology

The immediate difficulty in analyzing Chang Po-tuan's (1987) Understanding Reality is its abundance of symbolic language--which, at first glance, does more to obscure the stages of the alchemical process than it does to reveal them. The symbolic language is at once the cause of the struggle to find the meanings of the alchemical metaphors and the key to understanding the alchemical process. The depth and expanse of the subject matter covered in Chang's verses also contribute to this difficulty--not only in the analysis of their

meaning, but in the organization of the material as well. The following discussion first describes the methodology that will be used to find the meanings in Chang's verses and then confirms the use of the selected methodology through the presentation of a personal dream.

The profusion of symbolic language in Chang's (1987) text can be traced to the precursors of Chinese literature, divinatory hexagrams. Knowledge therefore depended on hermeneutics: interpretation of the hexagrams and "writing belonged to an elite which had the power to decipher the world" (Robinet, 1979/1993, p. 20). The hermeneutic methodology was established in China as early as the Han dynasty. Hermeneutics, according to Marino (1977/1982), is "the method or 'science' for 'deciphering' religious meanings and those of any other nature" (p. 21). A hermeneutic methodology deciphers meanings "in documents and through documents" (p. 39) by first separating the data under study into units of meaning that can then be compared to similar units of meanings found in other documents. Such a methodology establishes a reciprocity and a continuous collaboration between the inquirer and the text under study as well as with other relevant texts. This method is also known as the hermeneutic circle.

Although no specific starting point is evident in the hermeneutic circle, this methodology requires a separation of excerpts from the text that is intuitively perceived as a whole. The text is a structural system of symbolic associations and is the foundation for interaction between the whole and its

parts: the parts can only be understood in reference to a whole, whereas the whole is defined by its parts. The inquirer, by separating the whole into fragments, is able to amplify the aggregates with material from the text and from other documents. The meaning of the text then arises in the space between wholeness and parts and between the historical past of the document and the present inquiry.

The hermeneutic circle thus insures a constant movement from inner (interpretations and reflections) to the outer (the texts) and a return to inner. This methodology parallels the alchemical process, also a series of separations and reintegrations. The circulatory movement of the hermeneutic circle is not unlike the spiral in a conch that is the focus of a recent dream. The dream is presented here because the conch in my dream serves as a model for the methodology and organization of this study. In a Jungian fashion, I will describe the contents of this dream and continue with a self-analysis of it and its relevance to the organization of this study.

The setting of the dream is Waikiki Beach, but the scene appears to be shadowy, and the colors are muted, instead of the high-contrast colors found in a beach scene. I see a small group consisting of three to four Polynesian women. They have ample figures and are sitting on a mat on the ground displaying sea shells. Although the shells remind me of a conch that I own, these are conches that I have never seen before. The colors are iridescent blues, mauves, and greens. I know that these are exactly the kind of shells that my friend, Aimee, is

looking for. I somehow manage to tell her I've found the shells, but when she gets to the beach, she can't seem to find the shells or the women. I attempt to lead her to them but then awaken.

The following self-analysis of the dream associates it with this study and reveals a natural methodology to such a work. The setting of the dream, a beach, is the transitional space between ocean and land. The ocean is frequently associated with the unconscious, whereas land is associated with consciousness. The beach is the borderline between these two levels of consciousness and can be associated with the goal of my study, a deeper understanding of the transformation of unconscious content to consciousness and to my position of understanding the unconscious content in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987).

In this dream, my shadow is present as Aimee, who is blond, blue-eyed, and light skinned, whereas I am brown-eyed and brown-skinned. She is a psychologist, someone I worked with over 7 years ago. As a licensed psychologist, she is experienced in the practice of psychology and supervises postdoctoral psychology fellows. I consider myself a student of depth psychology but associate Aimee with the currently more acceptable schools of cognitive-behavioral psychology. She has, however, expressed an interest in depth psychology, and we still meet from time to time. Not only do I associate her with that part of me that wants to present this material in a scholarly and academic manner, but there is also a Chinese connection. She adopted a baby from China 2 years ago.

In my dream, Aimee has had difficulty in locating the conch, whereas I found the shells without intending to do so. Although I admired them, I felt that she wanted and needed them more than I did. This contrast points to the shells as the focus of my dream. Their unusual iridescent colors that attracted me to them tell me that these are extraordinary shells. These shells are larger than the palm of my hand, and their size suggests that they likely came from waters deeper than waters at the shoreline. This association brings to mind Edinger's (1995) caution that the subject of alchemy "is oceanic and to take it seriously means to run the risk of drowning" (p. 17). Edinger's statement describes the struggles I have had with the material of this study.

The associations of the shells with alchemy and the ocean are enhanced by the presence of the women in the dream. For Jung (1912/1967), "the maternal significance of water is one of the clearest interpretations of symbols in the whole field of mythology" (p. 218). Jung's (1956-57/1970) following discussion amplifies the associations between water, women, and the unconscious. First, miraculous water "brings together all that is divided. The water is therefore called 'mother'" (p. 21). Second, Jung states that "the mother, the unconscious, is the place where the symbol of wholeness appears" (p. 356). Finally, Jung claims that a combination of water, woman, and the unconscious is an "excellent symbol for the living power of the psyche" (1936/1968, p. 74). The associations of the shells, the ocean, and the women, along with the shadowy colors of the dream,

are manifestations of the power of psyche--the archetype underlying my dream and one of the foci of this study.

The associations of Aimee, my shadow, and the conch are applicable to my struggles with this paper. As my shadow, Aimee, who was not able to find the shells, represents that part of me that has not been able to recognize the presence of innate knowledge that is represented by the conch with its spirals in Chang's (1987) verses. Because Aimee represents behavioral and rational, thus masculine, psychology, she also can be associated with another recurring subject of this introduction, Cleary and his interpretations of the alchemical material. Aimee and Cleary represent methods of inquiry that rationalize and purge the mystery from alchemical material and ignore the Taoist antecedents of Chinese alchemy. Aimee represents my initial attitude toward my tasks and my attempts to work with the alchemical material and organize the material. My initial attempts were preventing me from understanding the material, just as Aimee's behavioral approach avoids the discovery of the shells and any opportunity to engage with the spiral path, the alchemical process itself. However, the prognosis of the dream is positive because of the association of Aimee's Chinese baby. The baby represents the alchemical task, material that has to be nurtured and developed.

Not only the baby but also the associations of the shell as well as the conch itself offer a model for the methodology and the organization of this study. Psyche's power, or ch'i, is represented in the conch, a model of the unity of two

opposites. The spiral in the interior of the conch is a dimensional representation of the mandala that Jung completed during his own alchemical process that led to his discovery of the Self. Upon closer examination of a conch, one can see that the whorls of the interior are united to the spiral found on the apex of the conch. The conch is an integration of inner whorls with the outer spirals on the apex:

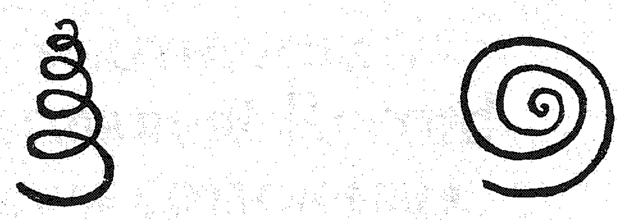


Figure 2. The Spirals of the Conch

Figure 2 illustrates the union of inner whorls and outer spiral in one form. This movement is associated with the circular movement of the Tao that Jung (1957/1967) associates with the divine spirit: "God is two in one, like man" (p. 27).

As noted earlier, circulation around a center point is a recurrent motif in alchemy. The circular path is a circulatio, a process in which chemical materials are repeatedly sublimated (heating a solid so that it passes directly into a gaseous state) and coagulated (cooling a liquid into a solid). The circulatio is found not only in chemistry, astrological imagery, and alchemy, it is also found in psychology:

> Circulatio is the repeated circuit of all aspects of one's being, which gradually generates awareness of a transpersonal center uniting the conflicting factors. There is a transit through the opposites, which are experienced alternately again and again, leading finally to their reconciliation. (Edinger, 1985, p. 143)

This is a description of the path of individuation. Jung (1963/1989) describes such a "circumambulation of the centre" (p. 197) in his own individuation.

The shell's spirals that bring together inner and outer also highlight Jung's (1963/1989) questions about the process of his own inner and outer integration and reflect my own questions regarding this study:

> What is this process leading to? Where is its goal? From my own experience, I knew by now that I could not presume to choose a goal which would seem trustworthy of me. It had been proved to me that I had to abandon the idea of the superordinate position of the ego. (p. 196)

Jung's questions speak to the goal of the Complete Reality Taoism process, the establishment of a relationship between ego-consciousness and celestial consciousness. Stated psychologically, this is the establishment of an attitude wherein ego-consciousness defers to innate knowledge. Jung's questions also disclose the effects that a superordinate ego would have on this study: an ego-consciousness that wants to be in charge and lead, rather than following the path of psyche and her images, would not arrive at the center point that unites the inner whorls and the outer spirals of the conch. In contrast, the conch in my

dream represents psyche's circular path and models the path that I should take to arrive at the center point, the goal of my study. The parallels between the shell, the alchemical process, and the hermeneutic circle reinforce the affinity between the alchemical way of knowing and being and hermeneutic methodology. This is not surprising: as noted earlier, hermeneutics is a traditional methodology of Taoist scholars.

The traditional relationship between alchemy and hermeneutics will continue in this study in at least two ways. First, the hermeneutic process that will be used in this study is a series of separations. The separated parts will be explored and amplified with associations found in the documents of Taoist and Western scholars and other mythological, religious, and cultural material. These associations will be integrated into the separated part that is under scrutiny leading to a syncretism of East and West. Second, the first step of the hermeneutic process can said to be the equivalent of the first stage of the alchemical process: at the beginning, Understanding Reality (Chang 1987) is the equivalent of the state of nigredo, and the prima materia, the state of wholeness. As it is in the Taoist cosmos, a separation from the wholeness of One is necessary for the unconscious content to be brought to consciousness.

It will therefore be necessary to explore all of the 99 stanzas in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) in order to select verses for analysis. Because the alchemical process is described by many Taoist scholars as a

three-stage process, refining ching, refining ch'i, and refining shen, those of Chang's verses that are associated with each of these steps will be identified followed by a second selection, the verse to be analyzed. The next step will be a third separation wherein metaphors from the selected verse will be selected for analysis. The metaphors and symbols are signposts providing the clues that will lead the exploration to other associations resulting in a rich and complex picture.

The amplification process ensures a reciprocity between Understanding Reality and other texts and between myself (inner) and the texts (outer). There will also be a circulation of thoughts and reflections of the inner meanings of Chang's metaphors and myself as the outer. By repeatedly separating and integrating the associations, a theme or a pattern will emerge that will point to the underlying archetype. The identification of the archetype offers new perspectives of Chang's instructions and descriptions of the alchemical process. In my dream, the inner meaning of Chang's verses, an innate knowledge, is represented by the center point of the conch's spirals. The conch in my dream is not only a model of the methodology but, as the following discussion will show, also the organization of this study.

Organization of the Study

The literature review highlights the origins of Complete Reality Taoism, the science of essence (mind) and life (matter), and the contributions of scholars who recognize the psychological nature of alchemy. In the literature review, not

only the spiral but the theme of the number Three emerged in the motif of tri-unities and the three-stage alchemical process in both Chinese and Western alchemy. These themes, fortified by my dream of conch, will serve as the models for the organization of this study. Each of the following three chapters will consist of a circumambulation of one stage of the tri-partite alchemical process: refining ching, refining ch'i, and refining shen. The last chapter will be a final circumambulation of the Taoist cosmos that will take a closer look at its vital energy, ch'i.

In Chapter 2, the first circumambulation will focus on those of Chang's (1987) verses that address the beginning stage of the alchemical process, the refining of vitality or ching. These verses will be explored first from the perspective of Liu's accompanying commentary. Although Liu, like Cleary, works to demystify alchemical symbology, his knowledge of Chang's text is extensive and will be a guide through the labyrinth of the symbols in Chang's verses. Liu's commentary of Chang's verses will serve as a guide that will point to the knowledge of other Taoist scholars. The associations from the documents of these scholars will bring to the surface the deeper meanings of the symbols. The meanings of the symbols and metaphors in Chang's verses that arise from this circumambulation will be supplemented by Western alchemical literature including those that contribute psychological perspectives.

The union of Taoism and Western alchemy not only facilitates a deeper understanding of Chang's (1987) instructions for the beginning stage of the

alchemical process, but also identifies recurring themes that will help to bring about insights on the union of consciousness and the unconscious. One such theme, reversals, sets the foundation for an exploration of the second stage of the alchemical process. The goal of Chapter 3, therefore, is to refine and enlarge our knowledge of the second stage, the blending of the opposites. An exploration of the opposites that are united highlights the significance of the energy ch'i. Chapter 3 therefore focuses on the blending of the opposites and the role of ch'i whereas Chapter 4 will explore the spiritual aspects of the alchemical goal, the refining of shen. Although Jung (1957/1967) refers to this stage as a detached consciousness and Odajnyk (1993) speaks of it as a transcendental state, the exploration of this stage from the perspective of Chang's metaphors will bring a deeper understanding of the ultimate goal of alchemy. Exploration of each of the three stages of the alchemical process is undertaken to enrich our knowledge of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process and bring us closer to the center point and is itself an alchemical process that will transform unconscious content to conscious awareness. The union of Taoism and Western alchemy will, in the words of Jung "create a new attitude" (p. 17), a "new level of consciousness" (p. 15) regarding Chang's instructions for spiritual immortality.

Finally, Chapter 5 brings together the recurring themes and the findings of this study that will enrich Jung's (1957/1967) commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower. These discoveries are revisited through the prisms of the T'ai-chi and the Wu-chi that tell the story of the vital energy ch'i. A second exploration

of the two circles, symbols of the Taoist cosmogony and ch'i, allows a closer look at the Taoist perspective of their cosmos that will bring new insights into the relationship between body, soul, and spirit. Although Jung devoted his life to the exploration of this relationship, an exploration of the Taoist cosmogony will contribute a new dimension to his studies and bring another perspective to our understanding of psyche's images and how her images arise from the unity of the opposites. The fifth and final chapter also looks at ch'i's maternal aspects and the hierarchical relationship of its two poles before returning to the starting point, a meeting of East and West. In short, how the Chinese alchemical process can be incorporated into our daily lives.

CHAPTER 2

STARTING FROM FIRE AND WATER

This chapter not only focuses on the first part of the three-stage Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process, but also establishes the methodology of this paper and demonstrates how a study of Chinese alchemy can be approached from a depth-psychological perspective. Because a thorough study of each verse in Chang's complete text is beyond the scope of this paper, one verse will be selected as representative of each of the three stages. The exploration of the alchemical process will not, however, be limited to the three selected verses because other text from Chang's works will be included in the analogical analysis of his metaphors. Furthermore, the study of the first stage is preceded by a consideration of the first two verses in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). These verses not only introduce Chang's method of teaching but also the importance of the Taoist cosmogony in Complete Reality Taoism. Following this discussion, a description of the selection of Chang's fourth verse, Part 1 is presented. The study of the first stage is guided by another separation from the whole, a selection of metaphors that can be amplified. The processes of separation and analysis are carried on in the following chapter where Chang's sixth verse is selected as being representative of the middle stage and in Chapter 4, a study of Chang's third verse and the final stage of the alchemical process.

Death and Immortality

Complete verses will henceforth be presented in capital letters as this is the format that Cleary uses in his translation of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). Verses 1 and 2 are as follows:

Verse 1, Part 1

IF YOU DO NOT SEEK THE GREAT WAY TO LEAVE THE PATH OF DELUSION, EVEN IF YOU ARE INTELLIGENT AND TALENTED YOU ARE NOT GREAT. A HUNDRED YEARS IS LIKE A SPARK, A LIFETIME IS LIKE A BUBBLE. IF ONLY YOU CRAVE MATERIAL GAIN AND PROMINENCE, WITHOUT CONSIDERING THE DETERIORATION OF YOUR BODY, I ASK YOU, EVEN IF YOU ACCUMULATE A MOUNTAIN OF GOLD CAN YOU BUY OFF IMPERMANENCE? (p. 27)

Verse 2, Part 1

THOUGH HUMAN LIFE HAS A LIMIT OF A HUNDRED YEARS, THE LENGTH OF LIFE, AND WHETHER IT WILL BE DIFFICULT OR SMOOTH, CANNOT BE KNOWN BEFOREHAND. YESTERDAY RIDING A HORSE THROUGH TOWN, TODAY A SLEEPING CORPSE IN A COFFIN: FAMILY AND WEALTH CAST OFF, THEY ARE NOT YOUR OWN POSSESSIONS; WITH EVIL DEEDS COMING ON, YOU CANNOT FOOL YOURSELF. IF YOU COME UPON THE GREAT

> ELIXIR WITHOUT LOOKING FOR IT, HAVING COME UPON IT, YOU ARE A FOOL IF YOU DO NOT REFINE IT. (pp. 27-28)

Chang begins his work with the presentation of a pair of opposites that are easily identified: death and immortality.

The presentation of information through pairs of opposites not only introduces one of Chang's (1987) methods of instruction, it also demonstrates the predominance of wholeness in Taoist thought. Despite Liu's (Chang, 1987) interpretation that these verses are a "drum of truth to wake everyone up" (p. 27) before death overtakes us all, the theme of death at the very beginning of Chang's text is more likely due to the Taoist view that death is a part of the alchemical goal, everlasting life. Just as Heaven does not exist without Earth or yin without yang, death does not occur unless there is life. This Taoist world-view can be traced to ancient cosmogonic myths.

Schipper (1982/1993) identifies two of the myths that illustrate the relationship of death and creation. The first myth describes how Lao-tzu transforms his body into the universe:

> His left eye became the sun; his right eye, the moon; his head became mount K'un-lun; his beard, the planets and constellations; his bones, dragons; his flesh, four-footed creatures; his intestines, snakes; his stomach, the sea; his fingers, the Five Peaks; his hair, trees and grasses; his heart, the Flowery Dais; as to his two kidneys, they were united and became the one, the Real and True Father and Mother. (p. 114)

Similarly, P'an-ku, a primeval being, transforms his body at death:

> His head became the Four Sacred Peaks; his eyes, the sun and the moon; his fluids, rivers and seas; his hair and beard, the grasses and trees. At the time of Ch'in and Han, [between the third century B.C. and the third A.D.], it was commonly said among the people that P'an-ku's head was the Sacred Peak of the East (the T'ai Shan), his belly that of the Center, his left arm that of the South, his right arm that of the North, his feet that of the West. Scholars of yore maintained that P'an-ku's tears formed the rivers, that his ch'i was the wind and his voice the thunder, whereas the pupils of his eyes became the lightning. (p. 114)

These two myths exemplify the foundation of the Chinese cosmogony: the creation of the universe is transformation of the "death of the First Being" (p. 115).

By associating the cosmogonic myths with Chang's (1987) statements about death and immortality, other meanings of the pair of opposites become apparent. At one level, Chang is informing his reader that physical death is certain but the "great elixir" is available. On the other hand, Chang is also saying that death creates immortality: death is an event that ends life but it is also an act of creation. This view can be found in the Chuang-tzu:

> This is the joy of nature [or: 'heavenly joy'] and thus it is said that: "for those who know the joy of nature, life is spontaneous action and death is the transformation of things." (Schipper, 1982/1993, p. 115)

Creation, or birth, and death are linked in the cycles of nature.

Although birth and death are easily identified as major events in nature's cycles, people are generally not aware of other phases of the cycle of life and death occurring within themselves. Jung (1934/1969) refers to these phases as secret events:

> From the middle of life onward, only he remains vitally alive who is ready to die with life. For in the secret hour of life's midday, the parabola is reversed, death is born. The second half of life does not signify ascent, unfolding, increase, exuberance, but death, since the end is its goal. The negation of life's fulfillment is synonymous with the refusal to accept its ending. Both mean not wanting to live, and not wanting to live is identical with not wanting to die. Waxing and waning make one curve. (p. 407)

Jung's view of death parallels the Taoist view that death is not only one part of a perpetual cycle: it is also the goal of life.

This congruence is repeated in Jung's (1957/1967) commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower. He finds that death is "psychologically as important as birth and like it, is an integral part of life" (p. 46). Jung associates death with the alchemical goal for he concludes that the alchemical goal is an "attitude that sets in after middle life and is a natural preparation for death" (p. 46). For Jung, this attitude "ensures the continuity of the detached consciousness [one of the terms Jung uses for the goal of the Chinese meditative process]" (p. 46). Jung's

recognition of the importance of death as an integral part of the attainment of the alchemical goal, immortality, highlights similarities between Chinese alchemy and depth psychology.

Chang's (1987) first two verses not only evidence correspondences with the West but also identify an important theme, the cycles of opposites. The significance of this theme becomes apparent in the following analysis of Chang's fourth verse. Chang's presentation of metaphors that are pairs of opposites that alternate is clearly obvious in this verse. The following amplification of the metaphors in Verse 4, Part 1 develops the theme of the cycles of pairs of opposites to a deeper level through an exploration of the doctrine of reversals.

Reversals

The previous discussion of the theme of life and death is a demonstration of the richness of Chang's (1987) metaphors. The poetic quality of his verses in Understanding Reality is evident from a cursory examination, just as the surface meanings of his metaphors appear obvious. However, on closer inspection, other levels of meaning can be identified. These richer meanings can be traced to Taoism's antecedents of mysticism and philosophy. In the following analysis of the beginning stage of the alchemical process, the theme of the cycles of nature is continued in the exploration of opposites, Fire and Water, and is further developed in the amplification of two other metaphors, floating and sinking, and the host and guest.

The amplification of a pair of opposites, Fire and Water, will integrate Taoist writings about the vital energy of the Tao with relevant Western alchemical references. As we shall see, the theme of reversal leads to an exploration of the vital energy of the Tao and how it is associated with two kinds of soul, the hun and p'o. An exploration of the hun and p'o souls first looks at their correspondences with two levels of consciousness, conditioned and celestial, and then at how they are associated with the creation of consciousness. That discussion precedes a closer look at the meditative process in Complete Reality Taoism. This chapter concludes with a return to the theme identified in Chang's (1987) first two verses, the relationship of death and immortality, and an examination of how this theme is associated with Chang's instructions for inversion.

Selection of Verse 4

Chang's (1987) fourth verse is selected to begin this analysis of the first stage of the alchemical process because it includes two instructions about beginnings. One instruction about beginnings in his fourth verse is the instruction to "first send down the silver within water" (p. 32). This direction suggests a starting point as well as a descent that may take this analysis to a deeper level. Another instruction is to know "inversion oneself, starting from Fire and Water" (p. 32). In addition to an exploration of these two lines in Chang's fourth verse as points of departure, this analysis of Verse 4 will also look

at the association of Chang's instructions and refining ching, the first stage of the Taoist alchemical process.

Chang's (1987) fourth verse is as follows:

> THIS METHOD IS SUBLIME AND THE REAL OF THE REAL. IT ALL DEPENDS UPON ON ONESELF ALONE, APART FROM OTHERS. ONE KNOWS INVERSION ONESELF, STARTING FROM FIRE AND WATER. WHO DISCERNS FLOATING AND SINKING, ESTABLISHING HOST AND GUEST? IN THE GOLD CRUCIBLE, IF YOU WANT TO KEEP THE MERCURY WITHIN THE CINNABAR, IN THE JADE POND FIRST SEND DOWN THE SILVER WITHIN WATER. THE SPIRITUAL WORK OPERATING THE FIRING DOES NOT TAKE A WHOLE DAY BEFORE IT BRINGS OUT THE ORB OF THE SUN IN THE DEEP POOL. (p. 32)

Chang's invocation to begin the work, a sublimation, with inversion "starting from Fire and Water" (p. 32) is also the starting point of this analysis of his fourth verse.

Fire and Water

Chang's (1987) instruction as well as Liu's (Chang, 1987) following definition of inversion guides the analysis of his fourth verse that begins with the selection of metaphors that will be subjected to closer inspection. The first metaphors selected for amplification are taken from Chang's precept to "know inversion oneself, starting with Fire and Water" (p. 32). According to Liu, inversion "means inversion of yin and yang and reversal of creation" (p. 33).

Liu's interpretation not only contributes a definition of inversion and identifies Fire and Water as a significant pair of opposites in the verse, but also intimates that inversion is associated with the theme of death and immortality. In addition, Liu's statement that inversion is the reversal of creation confirms that Chang's fourth verse is based on the Taoist understanding of the cosmos. However, Liu, instead of discussing the reversal of creation, claims that Fire and Water are levels of consciousness: Fire represents human consciousness whereas Water represents the mind of Tao. It is therefore necessary to turn to other sources that will explain in greater detail how the two trigrams, Fire and Water, are, in Liu's words, the reversal of creation and how they are associated with inversion. The following exploration begins with a look at Jung's (1957/1967) commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower.

Jung's Comments on Reversals

In Jung's (1957/1967) commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower, he refers to the Chinese alchemical process as "a process of reversal" (p. 21). Although Jung does not pursue the motif in depth, he does recognize the importance of reversals: First, he associates the opposites consisting of one that is "yang-like, the other yin-like" (p. 25) with the rotation of "the poles of light and darkness" (p. 25) so that there is an alternation. Second, Jung cites the I Ching: "When yang has reached its greatest strength, the dark power of yin is born within its depths, for night begins at midday when yang breaks up and begins to change into yin" (p. 13). Jung's familiarity with the principle of the alternation of

the opposites and his claim that the alternation is a process of self-knowledge do not sufficiently amplify the meaning of Chang's precept to "know inversion oneself, starting with Fire and Water" (p. 32). Further exploration of the symbols, Fire and Water, is necessary to understand Chang's instructions for the beginning stage of the alchemical process and to expand Jung's interpretations of the alternations of the opposites. The following discussion adduces Robinet's statements about the alternations of Fire and Water and Burckhardt's and Jung's later findings on nature's cycles.

The Doctrine of Reversal

Robinet (1992/1997) explains how the inner lines of the trigrams Fire and Water exemplify the Taoist doctrine of reversal. Not only are the trigrams Fire and Water associated with the doctrine of reversal, they are two of the "most favored trigrams in the work of alchemical purification" (p. 236). According to Robinet, "this is what the masters call the 'reversal' of ordinary phenomena and historians of religion the 'hierogamic exchange of qualities'" (p. 240). By applying the doctrine of reversal to the trigrams Fire and Water, their symbolism is reversed so that water rises instead of flowing down and fire descends instead of rising. This means that in the process of inversion, Fire which is usually considered yang, is yin and the trigram Water, usually considered yin, is yang.

The doctrine of reversals is a fundamental tenet of the I Ching trigrams. Robinet (1992/1997) explains that the doctrine of reversal "means not only that the inner line predominates . . . but also that values are 'reversed' (jiandao)"

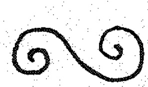
(p. 240). The inner lines of the I Ching trigrams are not only graphic representations of the cycles of nature's alternations but portray the forces of nature. Robinet's following summary of reversal is congruent with Jung's association of the alternations of yin and yang. According to Robinet, reversal is "a process of alternation, the balancing of forces, and the circulation of energies. When arriving at a terminal point of development, each thing reverses itself into its opposite or changes its form" (p. 154). Robinet's discussions are significant to this exploration of the first stage of the alchemical process as her statements clearly indicate that Chang's instructions describe the movement of cosmic energies. Furthermore, the energy of nature is binary wherein each opposite contains the seed of the other so that it transforms into the other.

The dynamic of reversal is better illustrated through the relationship of the two parent I Ching trigrams, Heaven and Earth, and their creations, Fire and Water. The trigrams portray the movement of the cosmic energy throughout the universe. The trigram Fire results when the inner line of Heaven, composed of three solid lines, reverses to a broken line: yin within yang. Similarly, the trigram Water results when the inner line of Earth reverses to a solid line: yang within yin. Fire and Water are therefore made of two different parts: each contains its opposite as one of its components. The reversal of the inner lines of Heaven and Earth results in two new, mixed forms. According to Robinet (1992/1997), the new forms, Fire and Water, represent "the principles of resonance (ganying) and growth and exchanges (jiaoji)" (p. 236). The four

trigrams paint a picture of a universe that is in constant evolution. This dynamic is expressed through Heaven and Earth, opposites that are the constants, whereas Fire and Water are opposites that are mobile. The four I Ching trigrams also describe the circular path of the reversals of nature, a motif appearing in the introduction to this study and in Jung's discussion of the opposites. The following discussion develops the association of the cosmic energy as portrayed in the trigrams and nature's circular path through Jung's and Burckhart's discussions of the sun's path.

Reversals in the universe. Jung (1957/1967) associates the alternations with the sun's path and the movement of the Tao. He states that in the process of reversal, "the sun-wheel begins to turn; the sun is activated and begins its course--in other words, the Tao begins to work and takes the lead" (p. 25). Burckhardt (1960/1967) provides additional findings that associate the sun's circular path with the rotation of nature's opposites. As he states, the path widens from the winter solstice to the summer solstice, then reverses to an "increasingly narrow circle until the full year comes around" (p. 44):

> Basically this corresponds to an "unwinding", spiral, which, after so many turns, becomes a "winding-up", spiral--an image which has been portrayed in a variety of signs, such as the double spiral,



> the twofold spiral vortex, familiar as the Chinese yin-yang, and not least in the staff of Hermes (the caduceus) in which two snakes are entwined on an axis--the world axis. (p. 44)

The circular movements of the sun and other heavenly bodies are examples of nature's spiral movements and its continual evolution. The trigrams Fire and Water represent the unwinding and winding-up movements of the sun whereas Heaven and Earth represent the constants, the points when the sun stops ascending or descending and reverses to an opposite movement.

The archetype of reversals. These findings about the movement of reversal highlight its universality and are evidence that reversal is the underlying archetype of the symbols of Fire and Water. Archetypes are defined by Jung (1954/1969) as "universal images that have existed since primordial times" (p. 5). Archetypes are the foundations of all symbols because "all conscious ideation and action have developed on the basis of these unconscious archetypal patterns and always remain dependent on them" (1957/1967, p. 12). Burckhardt's following discussion of the sun's path and Robinet's statement about the doctrine of reversal also confirm that reversal is the archetype underlying the trigrams Fire and Water and Chang's (1987) instruction for inversion.

According to Burckhardt (1960/1967), the oppositions observed in the sun's circular path and its ascending and descending movements are not an "opposition of causes, it is a question of an alternation of forces" (p. 44). The movements of the celestial bodies and the alternations of nature's opposites

correspond to the movements of a dynamic energy that pervades the universe in a circular movement. The associations of Fire and Water with reversals and reversals with a cosmic energy demonstrate how the amplification process works: when a symbol is amplified through associations, its meaning is not reduced to the underlying archetype but is instead expanded through the identification of other archetypes. In this example, the archetype of a reversal, identified in both Western and Chinese alchemy, points to the spiraling path of a dynamic energy that pervades the universe. Taoists refer to the movements of this energy as yin and yang. The following discussion takes a closer look at this pair of opposites that are not only observable in the heavens but are also present within our bodies.

The vitalities of Fire and Water. This amplification of Fire and Water establishes the methodology for this study of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process and identifies an important Taoist doctrine, reversals. The movement of reversal, portrayed in the inner lines of the I Ching trigrams, can be traced to its Taoist antecedents. Reversals are documented as early as the Chuang-tzu that "sees Yin and Yang as moving forces compared to chariots . . . They make the world go round, permutate, and criss-cross, and seek to rejoin the other" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 237). The energy expressed through yin and yang is evident throughout our physical world. An example is the production of steam when fire is applied to water. Steam arising from boiling water is a

transformation of the corporeal to the ethereal. This phase reverses to water when the temperature of the vapor drops.

As the simple act of cooking water, "the oldest form of chemistry" (Jung, 1954/1967b, p. 75) and the sun's course across the heavens illustrate, there are many observable cycles of nature's forces. Chang's (1987) precept to begin with Fire and Water identifies two alternating phases of nature's energy or cosmic energy. However, just as the transformations of our lives are not easily observable, so do we lack awareness of the alternating forces in ourselves. The inner lines of Fire and Water, cosmic yin and yang, are also known as the vitalities of Fire and Water and are "active principles within the human heart" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 237). According to Liu (Chang, 1986) "people are born endowed with vitalities of sun and moon (yang and yin), so the spirit and energy in the body are the vitalities of Water and Fire" (p. 14). For the Complete Reality Taoism school, spirit and energy, the analogs of cosmic yang and yin, move in alternating cycles in human bodies just as they do throughout the universe. Chang's instructions for inversion address the cosmic energies that alternate in people.

The exploration of Chang's (1987) metaphors, Fire and Water, reveals the depth of its symbolism and contributes another perspective to the union of the opposites: not only are the alternating movements of yin and yang associated with the union of opposites but the union of opposites also occurs in the outer world and also within ourselves. As the underlying archetype of Chang's

instructions for inversion and of Jung's (1957/1967) discussion of the alternation of the opposites, reversals are an eternal process of creations and deaths. Each phase of the reversal, yin as well as yang, contains the seed of its opposite so that each alternation is a death that creates a new value. The following discussion develops the theme of the alternations of the opposites through an exploration of the first stage of the alchemical process, refining ching.

Refining Ching

The analysis of the metaphors Fire and Water in Chang's (1987) fourth verse identifies their underlying archetype, reversals. The archetype of reversals is also associated with two themes identified previously, the cycle of life and death and a spiraling cosmic energy. In the following discussion, our understanding of reversals is enriched through a closer look at the three manifestations of the cosmic energy: ching, ch'i, and shen. This exploration is followed by a comparison of Taoist descriptions of refining ching and Western alchemical tripartite processes mentioned in the introduction to this study, the coniunctio and Ruysbroek's triad. The resulting correspondences contribute psychological perspectives to the process of inversion.

Ching

This discussion continues the exploration of the association of inversion and the vital energy that alternates in circular movements, the movements of yin and yang. Taoists agree that the Tao is the source of the vital energy and that it

also manifests as ching, ch'i, and shen. Each of these three phases of the vital energy is further differentiated into cosmic, subtle, and coarse forms. According to Blofeld (1978), "in their subtle 'cosmic' or 'original' form, these energies are pure and holy, the very source of light and life, creative powers that bring about stupendous transformations" (p. 130). Because Taoists also agree that the first stage of the alchemical process refines ching, this exploration focuses on this manifestation of the vital energy.

Robinet (1979/1993) describes ching, "the primordial element in the constitution of the body" (p. 86), as follows:

> In a way similar to the word ch'i, ching can refer to several levels of the particularized manifestation of the cosmic principle of essence. Thus it can refer to the Cosmic Essence itself, to the "humors" of the viscera, or even to sexual semen. Ching does not, however, simply refer to the liquid materials which travel through the body; rather it refers to the energized, or even the subtle and spiritual aspect of these materials. (p. 86)

Robinet confirms that ching is a manifestation of the primordial essence and is a "vital power of subtle and potential state" (p. 245).

Ching not only alternates from cosmic to subtle to coarse forms, it also transforms into ch'i. As Robinet (1979/1993) claims, ching reverses to ch'i and vice versa:

> According to certain methods of inner alchemy, ch'i, when descending, is transformed into ching just as the air of heaven becomes rain. On the

other hand, when ching rises it is transformed into ch'i just as water on earth becomes clouds. (pp. 86-87)

Robinet's findings of the alternation of the energy of the Tao parallel the prior description of the transformation of water to vapor.

Robinet's discussions of ching are also applicable to Chang's (1987) instruction to know inversion starting with Fire and Water. Her statements confirm that Chang is teaching his readers about the union of the opposites through metaphors that represent the alternating cycles of the manifestations of cosmic energy, the vitalities of Fire and Water. The following discussions based on two Western alchemical tri-unities, the coniunctio and Ruysbroek's trinity, expand the amplification of Chang's metaphors and the association of vital energy and our bodies by identifying similarities in ching and soul. These two Western alchemical motifs are important to this analysis for they also focus on the psychological aspects of the tasks of inversion and of refining ching.

Western Alchemical Triads

The Coniunctio

Parallels can be found in Jung's (1955-56/1970) discussion of the first stage of the coniunctio and Blofeld's (1978) descriptions of the vital energy in its manifestation as ching. According to Jung, the soul's tendency toward the sensory faculties is due to its attraction to "everything bodily, sensuous, and emotional" (p. 472). Jung is referring to the beginning of the coniunctio process when the soul is attached to the body. This state is similar to the first stage of the

Chinese alchemical because the initial tasks, conserving and restoring ching, are also focused on the body. Blofeld maintains that coarse ching can only transmute to its subtle and cosmic forms, the goal of the first stage, when bodily longings and sensations are stilled. The parallel between the first stage of the coniunctio and refining ching identifies a correspondence between the vital energy and soul.

Although the Chinese process and the coniunctio describe a three-stage process that begins with a detachment from the body and its senses, the Chinese alchemical process and the coniunctio differ in the second and third stages. The Chinese process focuses first on the conservation or nurturing of ching and then on the second stage, the transformation of coarse ching, ch'i, and shen to their subtle counterparts. In the third stage, the subtle forms of the vital energy are transformed to cosmic spirit when "mind and Mind are unified" (Blofeld, 1978, p. 133). Underlying the Chinese process is the understanding that these transformations are a part of the alternating cycles of the vital energy. This perspective is not readily apparent in the following description of the coniunctio.

Jung (1955-56/1970) describes the first stage of the coniunctio, a two step process, in terms of the unio mentalis (interior oneness) where the soul is first separated from the body and then unites with the spirit. In the second stage of the coniunctio, the united spirit and soul are reunited with the body. Although the reunion of body and spirit is a psychological state known as a united duality, the notion that this is another phase of cosmic energy or soul is not readily

apparent in descriptions of the coniunctio. Neither is it apparent in the final stage of the coniunctio when "unity of spirit, soul, and body is made one with the original unus mundus" (p. 465). Although a thorough study of the mysterium coniunctionis is beyond the scope of this paper, the Taoist principle that describes a cosmic energy that transforms from body to soul and soul to spirit may bring a new perspective to Jung's interpretations of the coniunctio.

Ruysbroek's Tri-unity

The prior discussion of the coniunctio and refining of the vital energy points out differences in Western and Taoist descriptions of the second and third stages. There is, however, another triad identified in Western alchemical literature that is closer to the Taoist descriptions of the alternations of the vital energy. Similarities can be found in each phase of Ruysbroek's tri-unity, mentioned previously in the literature review, with the coarse, subtle, and cosmic forms of the vital energy. The correspondences are as follows: (1) Ruysbroek's highest unity, a unity with God, corresponds with Blofeld's (1978) description of the cosmic phase of the vital energy: "pure undifferentiated being" (p. 132). In other words, Ruysbroek's highest unity and the cosmic form of the vital energy, primordial essence, are not accessible to ordinary human senses. (2) Ruysbroek's middle unity, the higher faculties where "soul bears the name of spirit" (Burckhardt, 1960/1967, p. 71), corresponds to the subtle form of the vital energy, "spirit not yet" (Blofeld, 1978, p. 131). (3) In Ruysbroek's lowest unity, the domain of the lower faculties, soul bears its own name and is, according to

Burckhardt (1960/1967), "the 'form' of the body which it animates, the body which it makes to live and keep alive" (p. 71). Ruysbroek's lowest unity parallels Blofeld's description of the subtle form of ching, "that within the body which gives matter tangible form and substance" (p. 131) and is congruent with the vitalities of Fire and Water.

The comparison of Ruysbroek's triad and the three forms of the vital energy identifies a similarity in soul and the vital energy in its most corporeal form, ching. In this state, the vital energy, as is soul, is affected by bodily senses and it, in turn, is attached to the body. The coarse form of the vital energy cannot be transmuted to a higher level, spirit, unless it detaches from the body. The correspondence of ching and soul is but one example of the parallels of the three phases of the vital energy and Ruysbroek's triad. The closeness between the Three Treasures and Ruysbroek's triad is significant and is the focus of the following discussion.

In Taoism, the three phases of the vital energy can be viewed as the alternations of a single force. Burckhardt (1960/1967) also concludes that Ruysbroek's tri-unity is a single energy that is described from three different perspectives. According to Burckhardt, "in its lowest unity this life is sensory and animal; in the middle unity it is rational and spiritual; and in the highest unity it is contained in its own essence" (p. 72). The correspondences between Ruysbroek's model of a threefold unity and the Taoist vital energy can be restated as follows: cosmic energy manifests in three forms: in the body it is

known as soul and is yin; in the mind it is known as spirit and is yang. In its highest form, this energy is called God in Western alchemy, and the Tao in Chinese alchemy. Soul that is united with spirit is called psyche in Western alchemy whereas yin united with yang is the T'ai-chi in Chinese alchemy (the T'ai-chi was introduced in the literature review as a symbol of the unity of the two opposites). The following is a diagram of psyche and the T'ai-chi:

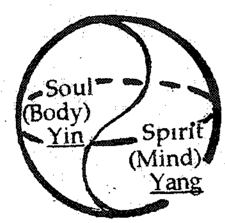


Figure 3. Psyche and the T'ai-chi

Figure 3 portrays the parallels in the alternating movements of the vital energy and psyche.

The preceding discussion of the correspondences in Chinese and Western alchemy differentiates the forms or phases of the cycles of the vital energy. Also becoming apparent in the exploration of the first stage of the alchemical process is the importance of the effects of bodily senses on the vital energy. This theme is developed further in the following exploration of the Chinese souls that were introduced earlier as the hun and p'o souls. In the amplification of the two kinds

of soul, also called higher and lower souls in The Secret of the Golden Flower (Cleary, 1991b), can be found a now-familiar pair of opposites, Fire and Water.

Higher and Lower Souls and Consciousness

This analysis of Chang's (1987) fourth verse began with an amplification of Fire and Water. In that exploration, it was noted that Liu associates Chang's metaphors of Fire with human consciousness and Water with the mind of Tao, also called celestial consciousness. An understanding of the Taoist doctrine of reversals, identified through the amplification of Fire and Water, not only is essential to the following look at the two levels of consciousness but also helps to amplify Liu's associations of Fire and human consciousness and Water and the mind of Tao. The following exploration of these two forms of consciousness begins with a closer examination of the two forms of soul, the hun and p'o souls, as described in The Secret of the Golden Flower (Cleary, 1991b).

The Hun and the P'o Souls

Jung (1957/1967) includes a discussion of the two kinds of soul in his commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower but digresses to a differentiation of masculine and feminine psychology rather than an in-depth exploration of the Chinese process. However, his findings on the Chinese souls are included here because they contribute a psychological perspective to the cycles of the vital energy. According to Jung, the two Chinese souls are psychological states because after death the hun and the p'o go their ways

independently: this "shows that, for the Chinese consciousness, they [the hun and the p'o] are distinguishable psychic factors; originally they were united in 'the one effective, true human nature', but in the 'house of the Creative' they are two" (p. 39). Jung concludes that the p'o, translated by Wilhelm as anima, has yin qualities and is attached to the body: the anima "is the 'energy of the heavy and turbid'; it clings to the bodily, fleshy heart. Its effects are 'sensuous desires and impulses to anger'" (p. 39).

Jung's (1957/1967) psychological description of the p'o soul corresponds to Fire, the conditioned consciousness of the Complete Reality Taoism school, and to the coarse form of the vital energy, ching. The similarities emphasize that at the beginning of the encounter of the two opposites, consciousness and the unconscious, the vital energy is affected by body. However, in typical Taoist fashion, The Secret of the Golden Flower includes the opposite situation, a state wherein the vital energy is not enmeshed with the body. Jung, therefore, also includes a discussion of the hun soul in his commentary.

Jung (1957/1967) agrees with Wilhelm's (1962) translation that the hun is "a higher breath-soul belonging to the yang principle" (p. 39) and is therefore masculine" (p. 39). Jung's finding of the hun soul parallels definitions of subtle or cosmic ch'i in two ways: first, subtle ch'i is a higher form of the vital energy and second, ch'i is also associated with air that is breathed in through the lungs. Because the hun is considered to be yang, it is similar to the trigram Water, celestial consciousness or the mind of Tao. On the basis of The Secret of the

Golden Flower and its teachings about lower and higher souls, the p'o and hun, Jung concludes that the hun is a consciousness that we have received from the great emptiness that "is identical in form with the primal beginning" (p. 39).

Jung's interpretation of the hun soul, that is, the higher soul is a consciousness that is similar to the primordial condition, corresponds to Cleary's (1991b) translation that the higher soul "is obtained from cosmic space and has the same form as the original beginning" (p. 16). According to The Secret of the Golden Flower (Cleary, 1991b), the higher soul, the hun, "resides in the eyes during the day and lodges in the liver at night. When it resides in the eyes, it sees; when it lodges in the liver, it dreams" (p. 15). The higher soul corresponds to yang energy that is firm for it "is in the celestial mind" (p. 16). In contrast, the lower soul lives within the body and "is dim; it is the function of consciousness" (p. 14) and corresponds to yin energy that is flexible.

The Secret of the Golden Flower (Cleary, 1991b) states that the refining process transforms the lower soul into the higher soul where "the spirit is concealed" (p. 15). At this level, the spirit can be transformed into the "celestial mind" (p. 16) where it is "pure light" (p. 16). The Secret of the Golden Flower's instructions to refine the lower soul differentiate the phases of the vital energy as do Blofeld's descriptions of ching, ch'i, and shen and Ruysbroek's threefold unity. In addition, this exploration of hun and p'o souls and the two levels of consciousness explains the association of the vital energy or soul with levels of consciousness.

The following is a summary of the relationship of the vital energy and soul. First, soul can be attached to the body, a form called p'o or coarse ching in Taoism. Second, soul can be the intermediary between body and spirit in which case it is called psyche or the T'ai-chi. When soul or the vital energy is detached from the body, it can be refined or transformed to spirit, or hun. Third, the vital energy and soul are also associated with levels of consciousness that, to this point in the analysis of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987), include a confounded or conditioned consciousness (when the vital energy is attached to the body) and a pristine or primordial consciousness (the mind of Tao). As we have seen, Chang (1987) refers to these two levels of consciousness as Fire (conditioned consciousness) and Water (innate knowledge).

Burckhardt (1960/1967) contributes additional information that explains the association between the different manifestations of the cosmic energy and the two levels of consciousness. According to Burckhardt, the alternation that transforms spirit to soul to body revolves around an invisible and motionless axis that corresponds to the "Intellect, which is immutably present in all circumstances of the world" (p. 44). Burckhardt's statement identifies a knowing that is present in the cycles of a transformative energy. In Complete Reality Taoism, this knowing is called the mind of Tao, a celestial knowledge. This exploration of the higher and lower souls points out the correspondences between the vital energy and soul and the two levels of consciousness and emphasizes that the process of inversion begins with a focus on the body. The

following discussion continues the exploration of inversion by following Chang's (1987) direction to "send down the silver within water" (p. 32). His instructions about a descent carry on the theme of the bodily effects on the vital energy and take this exploration to an even deeper level through an amplification of silver.

Soul and Silver

Burckhardt's (1960/1967) discussion of the association of soul and silver amplifies Chang's (1987) instructions for inversion. As does Jung's discussion of the first stage of the coniunctio, Burckhardt's conclusion about soul's effect on consciousness corresponds with p'o as defined in The Secret of the Golden Flower (Cleary, 1991b). This parallel helps to further clarify the differences in the two levels of consciousness and their associations with the vital energy. As noted earlier, the anima, or the p'o, "clings to the bodily, fleshy heart" (Jung, 1957/1967, p. 39) and is associated with the body for it animates the body. When the soul becomes confounded with desires of the body, Burckhardt claims that it is "fragmentary and in a certain sense 'congealed', and this prevents it from mirroring the Spirit freely and without distortion" (p. 72). In this state, our consciousness is also distorted because soul's entanglement with the body obscures the light of what Ruysbroek calls God and Burckhardt calls Spirit. However, in its pristine state, soul is reflective and able to reflect God or the Universal Spirit.

According to Liu (Chang, 1987), silver represents "innate knowledge of the original essence" (p. 35) that is not obscured by a conditioned state. Liu's

interpretation that silver's reflective quality represents the mirroring quality of the vital energy corresponds to Burckhardt's statement about soul's mirroring quality. The vital energy, when not attached to the body, is able to mirror the primordial essence. However, Chang's (1987) instructions to "first send down the silver within water" (p. 32) is more than an expression of innate knowledge. Chang is giving directions about a descent of being (life) or Fire into the unconscious (essence), Water. Burckhardt's and Liu's statements about the reflective quality of silver tell us that a descent into the unconscious is also the descent of the vital energy. When the vital energy is not entangled with bodily senses, it reaches a depth where it is able to reflect its opposite, and it will be as the light of the Tao, God, or Universal Spirit. In a pristine state, the vital energy is transformed into "yang energy that is light and clear" (Cleary, 1991b, p. 16).

In addition to his instruction to first send down the silver, a descent of the vital energy, Chang (1987) also includes its opposite, the ascent from the unconscious, in the last line of his verse: the rising of the sun from a deep pool. Because the ascent will be addressed in Chapter 4 of this study, this discussion focuses on the reflective quality of the vital energy and its association with Water. The deep pool has a reflective surface that is indicative of the vital energy's mirroring of the primordial essence and reinforces the association of the trigram Water, innate knowledge, and the unconscious. This meaning of Chang's metaphor of the deep pool is amplified by Burckhardt's statement that "the mirror of the ground of the soul is like silver" (p. 101) because silver can be

the "faithful mirror of its complementary pole, the universal spirit, and thus of all truths" (p. 99).

The complementary pole of Water is included in the last line of Chang's (1987) fourth verse in the imagery of the rising sun. Although the deep pool is synonymous with Water, the orb of the sun, also symbolized by Fire, represents the ascending movement of the vital energy. In this situation, the vital energy is comparable to a pure spring that in Burckhardt's (1960/1967) words, "is the mythical fountain of youth, from whose depths springs forth the mercury-like water of life" (p. 102). The vital energy rising from a deep pool depicts the separation of human consciousness, Fire, from the primordial unity. A demonstration of the wholeness of Taoist thought, the last line in Chang's fourth verse addresses both the descent of the vital energy, a reintegration, into the unconscious and the ascent that follows, a separation that creates consciousness. The following discussion carries on the themes of the mirroring ability of the vital energy and the alternations of energy and looks at how the energy becomes consciousness.

The Creation of Consciousness

The Secret of the Golden Flower (Cleary, 1991b) explains the process in which consciousness is created:

> Whenever people look at things, when they perceive them spontaneously all at once without discriminating, this is the light of essence. It is like a

> mirror reflecting without intending to do so. In a moment it becomes the light of consciousness, through discrimination. (p. 51)

This statement supports the findings of the preceding discussion: when the vital energy is pristine, it reflects the primordial essence, the mind of Tao or Water, and is the light of Tao. The entanglement of soul and body, discrimination, transforms the light of essence into the light of consciousness or Fire. Psychologically, this is an ego-consciousness. In addition, the association of discrimination and consciousness with the vital energy amplifies the meanings of the Complete Reality Taoism pair of opposites, essence and life. Essence in this situation represents the mind of Tao or innate knowing whereas life represents the vital energy when consciousness or discrimination has taken place or, in one word, being. For Chang (1987), an understanding of the differences between essence and life, knowing and being, is of such importance to the practitioner of the alchemical process that he includes two other metaphors that are symbolic of essence and life, the host and guest and floating and sinking.

The Host and the Guest

Cleary (1991b) contrasts the host, a symbol of the celestial state or true knowledge, with the guest:

> Everything concerned with mood and personality is in the domain of the guest. But through the process of social conditioning, the average individual comes to be centered in the guest and therefore regards it as the self. As a result the true host is concealed, and it cannot bring out its

> more objective and encompassing perspective on matters of mood and personality. (p. 143)

Cleary's description of the host and guest carries on the theme of the alternations between Fire and Water that are also associated with knowing and being, objective thinking and subjective feelings. This amplification of the host and guest finds that these are psychological states that correspond with Jung's differentiation of the faculties of psyche into thinking and feeling. The preceding discussion associates the host with Water, a state of objective thinking and the guest with Fire, feelings that interfere with objective thinking whereas the following amplification of floating and sinking expands our understanding of how Fire and Water are associated with Chang's (1987) instructions for inversion.

Floating and Sinking

The following discussion focuses on the rhetorical question in Chang's (1987) fourth verse, "Who discerns floating and sinking?" (p. 32). As we have seen, the movement of the cosmic energy ascends and descends. This is a dual movement symbolized in the trigrams Fire and Water. As Liu (Chang, 1987) reminds us, Fire is a metaphor for conscious knowledge because the middle line in Fire is yin and flexible and it "flies like the rising flames of fire when the human mind stirs" (p. 33). Conscious knowledge is "the every day awareness of ordinary life, formed by training and experience" (Chang, 1987, p. 6). By reversing the rising flames of fire, the yin line of Fire is transformed to yang so that the "rising drying fire of true knowledge will descend" (p. 33).

In a similar manner, Water is a symbol of true knowledge because the middle line in the trigram Water is yang and firm. As previously noted, Cleary (Chang, 1987) defines true knowledge as "nondiscursive, immediate knowing, originally inherent in the human being, and not the product of learning" (p. 6). For Liu (Chang, 1987), Water sinks because when the real knowledge within it is obscured, it is in the province of metal and "it easily sinks down" (p. 33). Inversion transforms the yang line in Water to yin and the yin line in Fire to yang so flowing water rises and rising fire descends. Inversion reverses the two opposites.

Chang's (1987) rhetorical questions about the host and guest and floating and sinking are related to his instructions for inversion and demonstrate not only the depth of the symbolism of Fire and Water but also the depth of his directions for the alchemical process. The following discussion looks at the psychological aspects of inversion through Western alchemical views of meditation and the Complete Reality Taoism meditative process. In addition, the last line in Chang's fourth verse is revisited to integrate the findings of this exploration of the alternations of the opposites and the process of inversion.

A Sublime Method

Inversion

The alchemical process is, according to Chang (1987), a sublime method that is a solitary activity, an inversion. An inversion is a descent as the

metaphors of silver within water and the descent of Fire into Water portray. In Western alchemy, there is also a process in which the practitioner engages in a descent. This process, also solitary, is called introversion. For Jung (1955-56/1970), introversion requires a "careful investigation of desires and their motives" (p. 473) and a "turning away from sensuous reality" (p. 472) that moves the process to a deeper level where "unconscious content is brooded over and digested" (p. 204). This deeper level is, according to Silberer (1914/1971), symbolized by "dying, going down, subterranean crypts, vaults, dark temples, into the underworld, hell, the sea, etc.; being swallowed by a monster or a fish (as Jonah), stay in the wilderness, etc." (p. 243). Silberer defines introversion as follows:

> It means sinking into one's own soul; the withdrawal of interest from the outer world; the seeking for joys that can be afforded by the inner world. . . . We may also define introversion as a resignation of the joys of the outer world (probably unattainable or become troubled) and a seeking for the libido sources in one's own ego. (p. 243)

Introversion is a process of meditation that reverses the focus of our daily activities and, as does inversion, quiets body and mind. The following discussion continues the exploration of the first stage of the alchemical process by focusing on the Complete Reality Taoism method of meditation.

Meditation

Two indications that Chang (1987) is describing a meditative process are found in the last line of his fourth verse: "The spiritual work operating the firing does not take a whole day before it brings out the orb of the sun in the deep pool" (p. 32). First, the image of the sun arising from a deep pool can also represent a process of sublimation. Keeping in mind the Taoist doctrine of reversal, the rising sun represents the reversal of the outward focus to an inner focus: meditation is sublimation. Second, Chang overtly includes the period of time in which a meditative process can occur. "Not take a whole day" (p. 32) suggests that the alchemical process can be completed within a day's length. A similar reference to the length of the alchemical process is found in a discussion of the alchemical goal by Silberer (1914/1971). He states that the celestial and the terrestrial stone "may be easily produced and 'in a short time.'" (p. 165). For Chang and Silberer, the goal can be achieved "not only after death" (Silberer, p. 165) but within our daily lives. Sublimation, refining, inversion, and introversion are meditative processes.

Jung (1957/1967) initially called the Chinese meditative practices "Chinese yoga" (p. 29) but he is also aware that this is a process in which the practitioner is able to give "full expression to the creative fantasy" (p. 43). He recognizes that Chinese meditation is a process in which "consciousness is no longer preoccupied with compulsive plans but dissolves in contemplative vision" (p. 44). However, Jung does not pursue this subject in depth until his later work on the coniunctio.

In his last great opus, Jung (1955-56/1970) states that "Dorn rightly recommends an almost ascetic attitude to the world, so that the soul may be freed from its involvement in the world of the body" (p. 499). He continues:

> What I call coming to terms with the unconscious the alchemists called "meditation." Ruland says of this: "Meditation: The name of an Internal Talk of one person with another who is invisible, as in the invocation of the Deity, or communion with one's self, or with one's good angel. (p. 497)

Jung's conclusion supports the correspondences of the processes sublimation, inversion, refining ching, introversion, and meditation.

Taoist meditative practices have been well documented. Robinet (1992/1997) reminds us that the initial stage of meditation not only excludes the exterior world of the senses but also "the interior world of the emotions and thought" (p. 111). She describes various Taoist meditation techniques that have received much attention in Chinese alchemy. These "include a significant visual component" (p. 111) such as "making deities appear" (Robinet, 1979/1993, p. 123), meditation on the nine brain cavities, and on the cinnabar fields, and the previously mentioned waterwheel exercises. However, these descriptions of visualization exercises where energy is directed to various fields in the body are not evident in Chang's (1987) verses.

Inversion, according to Chang's (1987) instructions, is a sublime method that is a state of repose and contemplation. An excerpt from his 13th verse describes a state of reverie: "Stay relaxed beside the alchemical furnace and

watch the firing process; Just settle your spirit and breathe, and leave it up to Nature" (p. 51). Chang suggests that the alchemical work is achieved at home (within ourselves). There are no directions for visualization but we are encouraged to be relaxed and observant (watch the firing process). In short, let nature take its course.

Chang's (1987) 47th verse in Part 2 repeats this message:

> IF YOUR WANT TO KNOW THE METHOD OF RECOVERING ELIXIR OF GOLD LIQUID, YOU MUST CULTIVATE YOUR OWN GARDEN. IT DOES NOT REQUIRE HUFFING AND PUFFING, OR APPLICATION OF FORCE; SPONTANEOUSLY THE ELIXIR MATURES AND IS RELEASED FROM THE MATRIX OF REALITY. (p. 106)

Chang's sublime method does not require exertion or rigorous meditation.

The Secret of the Golden Flower (Cleary, 1991b) also emphasizes repose: "When students have little thought and much emotion, they sink into low ways. Just observe clearly, and when your breath grows quiet you then become accurately aware. This is the application of the method of reversal" (p. 18). According to The Secret of the Golden Flower and Chang's (1987) instruction to know inversion, inversion requires the quieting of the body and its passions. For Complete Reality Taoism, stillness of mind and body is the way of "keeping consciousness open and fluid while clearing sense of subjective feelings" (p. 6). In depth-psychological terms, this means stilling the ego so that the energy of the Self breaks though habitual thoughts and defenses.

Amplification of the metaphors in Chang's (1987) fourth verse supports the concordance of the processes of inversion, reversal, and meditation. The amplifications also enhance the meaning of the last line of the fourth verse: "The spiritual work operating the firing does not take a whole day before it brings out the orb of the sun in the deep pool" (p. 32). The following discussion revisits the last line in order to integrate the findings of the analysis of the metaphors in the verse and to summarize Chang's instructions for the first stage of the alchemical process. It also is another demonstration of the depth of Chang's instructions.

Chang's (1987) metaphor of the sun rising from a deep pool has several layers of meaning. First, the sun rising from the deep pool portrays his instructions to know inversion starting with Fire and Water: Fire (the sun) represents human consciousness that must first descend into Water, the unconscious, also a symbol of celestial consciousness. The reverse of this is the sun, consciousness, arising from the unconsciousness of the dark, the deep pool. This meaning also includes the alternating relationship of fire (sun) and water (deep pool), a cycle that is demonstrated in the sun's daily ascent from the dark, deep ocean and its return.

Second, the sun can be a symbol of the sublimated or pure state that is yang whereas its opposite in this case, the deep pool, symbolizes the corrupted state of the body, a yin condition. At this level of meaning, the rising of the sun represents the detachment of the desirous soul from body. Finally, the rising sun can also be associated with another archetype, a separation that is an ontological

movement. The separation of the vital energy of the Tao from the primordial state is the creation of being and consciousness.

The preceding discussion demonstrates the depth of Chang's (1987) fourth verse, a depth that expands Jung's (1957/1967) statements about the process of reversal, the rotation of light and dark forces that brings self-knowledge. The last line of Chang's fourth verse not only incorporates the movements of the Tao, a continual process of separations (deaths) and creations, but also expresses the beginning phase of the alchemical process. The first stage, the separation of soul from body, is associated with the theme introduced in the first two verses of Understanding Reality, the cycle of life and death. The following discussion returns to the starting point of this chapter, the theme of death. Death, one part of the alternating cycles of nature, was identified in Chang's first two verses and is also associated with the task of inversion.

Separation and Death

The separation of soul from the body is, in the words of Jung (1936/1968), the "equivalent of death" (p. 124). Burckhardt (1960/1967) proposes that death occurs at the beginning of every spiritual realization. This form of death is a "dying to the world. Consciousness must be withdrawn from the senses and turned inward" (p. 186). This is a withdrawal of our projections from the outer world through a descent into the unconscious. Death, although not mentioned overtly in Chang's (1987) fourth verse, is present in the process of inversion.

Inversion is the death of outward perspectives and the fear of looking within. Inversion is the death of comfortable habits and patterns and continuous mental talk so that body and mind are still. Inversion is the death of ego-consciousness as host. When the soul is not entangled with the body it descends to a depth where discrimination stops. When "not a single conscious thought is applied" (Cleary, 1991b, p. 53) soul reflects the primordial condition. Underlying inversion, death, and separation is the archetype of reversals. Reversal describes the alternations of soul from the primordial state to spirit and spirit to the body where it becomes entangled with the desires of the body. Reversal is also a return of the soul to its primordial state. The return begins with a death of the conditioned state in order that a reintegration with the primordial state can occur.

Summary

By allowing the metaphors in Chang's (1987) verses to lead the way, this exploration of the first stage of the alchemical process has come full circle from the nigredo, the state of chaos present at the beginning of the analysis of Chang's fourth verse. The selection of the fourth verse is followed by a separation of the verse into metaphors. Just as the first stage is a descent into the unconscious, the analysis of Chang's metaphors is also a descent into the deeper layers of his verse. The descent is guided by Chang's instructions to begin with Fire and Water. An amplification of Fire and Water reveals that Fire and Water are not

only symbolic of the opposites, yin and yang, but also of the first stage of the alchemical process, a descent into the unconscious: the meeting of Fire, conditioned consciousness, with Water, innate knowledge.

Reflections of the associations found in the writings of scholars of Taoist and Western alchemy amplify the meanings of Fire and Water. This process establishes the methodology of this study: the hermeneutic circle, a process of amplification that uncovers the underlying archetype, the true knowledge in each of Chang's (1987) metaphors. The underlying archetype that unifies Chang's metaphors is the doctrine of reversal, an important tenet in Taoism that describes the movements of the vital energy. As archetypes do, the movement of reversals points to other recurring themes and archetypes in Chang's fourth verse, separations, the phases of the vital energy, and the effects of body on the vital energy.

The body's effect on the vital energy is the focus of the first stage of the alchemical process. This motif is further developed in a comparison of the three forms of the vital energy with the coniunctio and Ruysbroek's triad. That exploration explains how the three phases of the vital energy are associated with consciousness. In the first stage of the alchemical task, the first meeting with the unconscious, the vital energy is like soul, attached to the body. When the vital energy is enmeshed with the body, it obscures the mind of Tao and is like Fire, a conditioned consciousness. This state requires a descent so that it can reflect its opposite, the mind of Tao. Therefore, the task of the first stage of the alchemical

process focuses on nourishing the vital energy so that it separates from its entanglement with the body. It will thus descend before rising like the orb of the sun from the deep pool.

The amplification of the metaphors Fire and Water as well as the symbolism of silver expands our viewpoint of the union of the opposites. Much like a rotation around a prism, each metaphor brings a different perspective of the union leading to a deeper understanding of the process that brings self-knowledge. Although Chang (1987) refers to this process as inversion, it is also a process of meditation. Further exploration of the meditative process in the second and third stages of the alchemical tasks will be undertaken in the following chapters. A study of Chang's sixth and third verses will continue this odyssey of the Way that is undertaken to enrich Jung's (1957/1967) interpretations of the Chinese alchemical process.

CHAPTER 3

HEAVEN AND EARTH JOIN

In the preceding chapter, an analysis of Chang's (1987) fourth verse divulges the richness of his metaphors. The metaphors, presented in pairs of opposites, portray the movements of the vital energy, the focus of Chang's instructions for inversion. Lying beneath the metaphors is the archetype of reversal, a universal pattern of movement. Chang's instructions for inversion, tell us how to reverse rising Fire, a symbol of conditioned consciousness, so that it descends into the depths of Water, a symbol of innate knowledge and the unconscious. In the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process, the descent occurs when body and mind are stilled. In the stillness, the vital energy separates, that is, detaches from bodily senses. The separation nourishes the vital energy and is a necessary precursor of the second stage of the alchemical process, the refining of the mind.

This exploration of the second stage is undertaken to bring a deeper understanding of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process and enrich Jung's (1957/1967) conclusions about the Chinese alchemical process. As in the prior chapter, the rationale for selecting a verse that addresses the second stage of the alchemical process will be presented. An analysis of the metaphors in the selected verse guides this exploration of the middle stage as well as carries on one of the major foci of this study, the union of consciousness and the unconscious. In this chapter, amplification of the homes of four creatures, frog,

quail, dragon, and phoenix, introduces even more intricate details that elaborate the theme of the union of the opposites. The analysis of these metaphors leads to an exploration of united dualities.

Ch'i is an outstanding example of a united duality and is the focus of the second stage, refining ch'i. An exploration of ch'i carries on a recurring theme, the three phases of the vital energy, ching, ch'i and shen, by taking an even closer look at the role of the vital energy in the creation of consciousness. Ch'i has similarities with two Western alchemical motifs, the spirit Mercurius and the anima mundi. In this chapter, interpretations of Mercurius and the anima mundi contribute psychological perspectives that enrich our understanding of the middle stage of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process. The exploration of the second stage concludes with a discussion of a third level of consciousness, a flexible or paradoxical consciousness.

The Alchemical Ingredients

The attention to ch'i and the levels of consciousness parallels the change in focus from body to mind that occurs during the second stage. The following analysis of the second stage of the alchemical process looks at the two opposites as alchemical ingredients. The alchemical ingredients, according to Chang (1987), are found within us all. The exploration, however, first requires the following separation, the selection of a verse that addresses the second stage of the alchemical tasks.

Selection of Verse

Although Taoist scholars agree that refining ch'i is a necessary step in the alchemical process, Cleary (Chang, 1987) states that the second stage of the Complete Reality Taoism process is a union of opposites, the blending of yin and yang. The blending of opposites is a recurrent motif in Chang's (1987) text, rendering the identification of verses that specifically address the second stage a difficult task. However, Chang includes the union of two pairs of opposites, Heaven and Earth, and Water and Fire, in his sixth verse, Part 1. Important motifs in the previous chapter of this study, the four trigrams represent a double union and are significant as "parent" trigrams in the I Ching. These are two reasons for selecting Verse 6.

A third reason is based on the number Three and its association with creation myths cited in alchemical literature. Creation myths that describe three stages of separation from the primordial wholeness include the cosmos of the Tao and Ruysbroek's threefold unity that were identified in the prior chapter and literature review. A third creation myth is described by Basilides, "a brilliant Christian Gnostic teacher and a prolific author who flourished in the first half of the second century" (Edinger, 1996a, p. 58). According to Basilides, the world is created from a non-existent God whose cosmic seed gives birth to three sonships. These creation myths bring to light a correspondence in the number Three and the separation from the primordial wholeness. Separation was introduced in the

previous chapter as an important theme in the first stage of the alchemical process.

Because the selection of verses from Chang's (1987) complete text is also a process of separation, the number Three is used to support the selection of Chang's sixth verse as a verse that addresses the second stage of the alchemical process. The number Three is represented in the sixth verse of Part 1, Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987), as three easily identified themes. Verse 6 is as follows:

> EVERYONE ORIGINALLY HAS THE HERB OF LONG LIFE: IT'S JUST THAT THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND IT, AND THROW IT AWAY IN VAIN. WHEN THE SWEET DEW DESCENDS, HEAVEN AND EARTH JOIN; WHERE THE YELLOW SPROUTS GROW, WATER AND FIRE MIX. A FROG IN A WELL WOULD SAY THERE IS NO DRAGON'S DEN; HOW COULD A QUAIL IN A CAGE KNOW THERE IS A PHOENIX NEST? WHEN THE ELIXIR IS FULLY DEVELOPED, NATURALLY GOLD FILLS THE ROOM; WHAT IS THE NEED TO LOOK FOR HERBS AND PRACTICE BURNING REEDS? (p. 38)

The first theme in this verse, the alchemical materials, is found in its first and last lines. These two lines are not only related to Chang's instructions for inversion but also allude to the psychic nature of the alchemical process. The second apparent theme is found in the second sentence: what happens when two pairs

of opposites are integrated. The third obvious theme is found in the third line of the verse, another of Chang's rhetorical questions. This analysis of the second stage of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process proceeds with Chang's question about the homes of four animals, two ordinary and two mythological.

Homes

The preceding chapter introduced Chang's use of rhetorical questions as a didactic technique and "homes" as a symbol to express the introspective nature of the alchemical procedure. In his sixth verse, Chang (1987) combines these two devices in a question that contrasts two homes that are prisons for their occupants with two homes that belong to mythological animals. This juxtaposition of homes of confinement and natural homes begs for a synoptic view of Chang's references to homes. A review of his two translated texts, Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) and The Inner Teachings of Taoism (Chang, 1986) finds several references to homes. A closer look at Chang's use of homes not only brings up the theme of the psychic nature of the alchemical task but also carries on two themes identified in the analysis of the first stage of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process, our bodies and Fire and Water.

The Alchemical Site

In his seventh verse in Part 2, Chang (1987) states that "this supreme treasure is in everyone's house" (p. 65). In Verse 13, Part 1, he instructs his reader: "Leading the White Tiger, go back home and nurture it" (p. 50).

However, it is in his earlier text that Chang (1986) explains that home is a symbol for our physical body, the site of the alchemical task:

> Repair the alchemical workshop.
>
> Nourish the temporal; strengthen the physical body.
>
> To nourish the temporal is the point of departure;
>
> When vitality, energy, and spirit are vigorous, one can bear hunger and cold.
>
> Having cultivated the physical body until it is firm and strong.
>
> Giving shelter from the rain and wind, it is good for refining the elixir. (pp. 40-41)

In this verse, Chang refers to the first stage of the alchemical process where the focus is on the body: he equates the repair of the alchemical workshop to the strengthening of the physical body. This verse from Chang's "Twenty-four Secrets of Alchemy" explicitly states that our bodies are homes that shelter us from the elements.

Chang's (1986) use of home in the above verse is congruent with the first and last lines of his sixth verse in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987): our bodies are essential in the alchemical task. Kohn (1992) likewise finds that our bodies are necessary:

> The body is therefore where the practice of mysticism starts. Without a proper vessel, the Tao has no place to develop. A strong and healthy

> body is thus the foundation for all further spiritual cultivation and spiritual oneness. (p. 164)

Kohn's statement supports Chang's use of homes to express the necessity of our bodies in the alchemical task and to inform his reader that the alchemical goal can only be attained when the body is ready.

The use of homes as a symbol of our bodies and the alchemical site is paralleled in Western alchemy. Silberer (1914/1971) cites Alipili who asks: "If thou knowest not the excellency of thine house why dost thou seek and search after the excellency of other things?" (p. 153). Chang's statements about the alchemical workshop and the location of the alchemical materials are congruent with Alipili's rhetorical question. The correspondence in Alipili's and Chang's (1987) rhetorical questions tell us that "the herb of long life" (p. 38) is within ourselves: we are our homes. Although homes can be symbols of our bodies, necessary ingredients of the alchemical process, a home, as the following discussion finds, is also associated with the psychic nature of the alchemical process.

Imagination

The use of a home as a symbol of an imaginary process can be found in Understanding Reality (Chang 1987), Verse 9, Part 1. Chang instructs his reader as follows: "I urge you to find out the place where your body was born; going back to the basis, returning to the origin, this is the production of the medicine" (p. 45). In this line, home, the place of our birth, represents the return to the

primordial state and is therefore a symbol of the psychic process. A statement found in the Chuang-tzu not only supports the association of home and the psychic nature of the alchemical task but also explains the symbolism.

According to Graham (Chuang-tzu, 1981), "lodging-place" or a dwelling is a traditional mode of expression that Chuang-tzu uses: "saying from a lodging-place is traditionally taken to be the expression of ideas through imaginary conversations" (p. 107). Graham's association of lodging place and imagination is applicable to Chang's (1987) use of dwelling places in his sixth verse. His inclusion of homes, a symbol of imaginary conversation, reinforces his rhetorical question, a query from the frog's and quail's perspective that is an imaginary conversation: both "home" and Chang's question refer to the psychic nature of the alchemical task. The following discussion elaborates the frog and quail as well as their homes, a well and a cage.

The Frog and the Quail

The frog in the well is a metaphor found as early as the Chuang-tzu. In the chapter entitled "Autumn Floods," the Spirit of the Ocean tells the Spirit of the River "You cannot speak of ocean to a well-frog, which is limited by its abode" (Chuang-tzu, 1942, p. 683). The frog and the quail in Chang's (1987) verse are also limited. According to Liu (Chang, 1987), this frog and this quail are restricted from "following the laws of God" (p. 55). Although the term God is usually not associated with Taoism, Liu explains that God in this situation means the primordial state: "there is only the single fundamental nature of innate

knowledge and innate capacity, without any pollution" (p. 55). On the basis of Liu's interpretation, it can be said that the frog in the well and the caged quail are not able to return to the primordial state. The frog in this verse, in spite of an intrinsic ability to transform itself from a tadpole, cannot become a dragon for its body is imprisoned in a well. The quail, a game bird, is ungainly in flight but possesses migratory instincts and can aspire to the flight of the phoenix. This quail, however, is caged and therefore also cannot attain its highest potential.

Liu's (Chang, 1987) statement emphasizes the contrast between natural homes and homes that are prisons and indicates that in Chang's (1987) rhetorical question, a restricted home symbolizes a mind that is like a prison. The frog and quail are not able to participate in the alternations of the universe because their vital energy has been trapped. Their confined states correspond to the trigram Fire, a symbol of conditioned consciousness. This frog and this quail are metaphors that tell us of a situation in which the vital energy is restricted and is therefore unable to follow the laws of nature. In short, the vital energies of the frog and quail are not able to reverse to an opposite state, represented by the trigram Water. The restricted frog and quail are symbols of the conditioned state of our minds when mundanity has overtaken the primordial essence. Chang is describing a state in which our minds can be as confined as the frog in the well and the caged quail.

The amplification of the frog and quail supports the association of the second stage of the alchemical process and psychic tasks. For Chang (1987), the

confined frog and quail are ideal examples of our need for inversion. In the restricted state, we are not able to "become a true human being" (p. 21) and consequently, are like animals. However, Chang offers the hope of transformation because "everyone originally has the herb of long life" (p. 38) that will raise us from a lower level of existence: "when all mundanity has been stripped away, the elixir is complete, leaping out of the cage of the ordinary life is myriad years" (p. 51). In his sixth verse, Chang contrasts the restricted states of the frog and quail with the dragon and the phoenix that are models of transformed vital energy. The following discussion carries on the theme of the psychic nature of the second stage by exploring the symbolism of these two mythological creatures. The amplification of the dragon and the phoenix uncovers details about the goal of the second stage and introduces another motif to the union of consciousness and the unconscious, united opposites.

The Dragon and the Phoenix

The contrast between the restricted homes of the frog and quail and the natural homes of the dragon and phoenix is repeated in the animals themselves. Of the four animals, the dragon is the best known in Chinese mythology and influences every aspect of Chinese life. Unlike the dragon in Western mythology, the Chinese dragon possesses many positive attributes. The dragon is a "symbol of supreme spirituality and the image of the divine power of transformation" (Saunders, 1955, p. 154). The dragon is a composite of many creatures:

> Its head is like a camel's, its horns like a deer's, its eyes like a hare's; its ears like a bull's, its neck like an iguana's, its scales like those of a carp, its paws like a tiger's, and its claws like an eagle's. It has nine times nine scales, it being the extreme of a lucky number. On each side of its mouth are whiskers, under its chin a bright pearl, on the top if its head the 'poh shan' or foot-rule, without which it cannot ascend to heaven. The scales of its throat are reversed. Its breath changes into clouds from which come either fire or rain. (Saunders, 1955, p. 76)

This description of the dragon speaks of its association with the great expanse of the universe and its association with the number nine.

The dragon's scales "are properly eighty-one in number, that is nine times nine, which in mystical calculations represent _yang_" (Ingersoll, 1928, p. 76). Nine is also associated with Lao-tzu: nine times nine is the length of Lao-tzu's gestation. Schipper (1982/1993) observes that "before he was born, Lao-tzu went though nine transformations, following a nine-phase cycle. The number nine corresponds to the accomplishment of cosmic creation" (p. 116). Nine, also being the number of stages of embryonic development, is closely associated with the cycle of birth and death.

The association of number Nine and the dragon identifies an aspect that can be confusing, for the dragon is also associated with water and would therefore be considered _yin_. However, the Chinese dragon is associated with the number Nine and is _yang_ in nature. Because it is _yang_, it is a theriomorphic

version of the trigram Water, yang within yin. Thus, the dragon is also a symbol of the Taoist doctrine of reversal, the alternating of the forces of nature. In Chang's (1987) sixth verse, the dragon represents the reunited opposites and is an outstanding symbol of the alchemical goal: infinite cosmic recreation through transformation. The dragon is also a model for the lowly frog. Were it not imprisoned, it too could aspire to dragonhood.

Like the dragon, the phoenix is a symbol of transformation and resurrection in China, but it is also such a symbol in other cultures. One story of its origin places it in the Arabian desert where it smears its wings with myrrh and burst into flames every century. Aflame, it undergoes transformation from the ashes of the fire "to live anew" (Saunders, 1995, p. 153). Also like the dragon, the Chinese consider the phoenix a symbol of immortality and the unity of the universe.

The phoenix is a composite of the universe. Its body is composed of the elements of the universe: "its cock's head was the sun, its swallow's back the crescent moon, its tail the trees and flowers, its feet the earth, and its fiery wings the wind" (Saunders, 1995, p. 153). The phoenix, although associated with fire, is considered to be yin. In this respect, it is a theriomorphic symbol of the trigram Fire: yin within yang. The phoenix in Chang's (1987) sixth verse, as is the dragon, is a symbol of the alternating forces of the universe, a union of two opposites.

This amplification of the homes of the frog and quail and the mythological dragon and phoenix introduces the theme of united opposites but also carries on a now familiar theme, reversal, the movement of the vital energy. The vital energy reoccurs in Chang's (1987) sixth verse as a transformative energy that alternates in cycles represented in the inner lines of the trigrams Fire and Water and in the dragon and the phoenix. This transformative energy is confined in the frog and the quail just as it is confined in the conditioned state of humans. When the energy is able to follow its natural course, it transforms conditioned consciousness into its opposite, primordial essence, an awareness of the Tao. The preceding exploration of homes identifies several of its meanings (our bodies, the alchemical ingredient, imagination) whereas the amplification of the four creatures highlights the transformative aspects of the vital energy. The amplification of homes and the creatures set the foundation for the following look at other metaphors in Chang's sixth verse, sweet dew and yellow sprouts, and blended opposites.

Blending the Opposites

According to Chang (1987), the blending of the opposites, Heaven and Earth, occurs in the presence of sweet dew whereas Fire and Water are united "where the yellow sprouts grow" (p. 38). The amplification of Chang's two metaphors, sweet dew and yellow sprouts, brings details of psychological states, the products of the second stage of the alchemical process. The amplification

draws on the Tao te-ching as well as Western alchemical interpretations of the caelum. The caelum is a substance that resembles heaven but is created on earth.

Sweet Dew

The motif of sweet dew, a state that occurs when Heaven and Earth are united, can be traced to the Tao-te ching. Henricks translates Lao-tzu's (1989) words as follows:

> The Tao is constantly nameless.
>
> Though in its natural state it seems small, no one in the world dares to treat it as a subject.
>
> Were marquises and kings able to maintain it,
>
> The ten thousand things would submit to them on their own,
>
> And Heaven and Earth would unite to send forth sweet dew.
>
> By nature it would fall equally on all things, with no one among the people ordering that it be so. (p. 84)

Not only does the descent of sweet dew symbolize the union of heaven and earth, Henricks' translation of Chapter 32 of the Tao-te ching associates sweet dew with an awareness of the Tao: sweet dew occurs when marquises and kings are able to be aware of the Tao. Cleary's (1991b) translation is similar: sweet dew showers down if "lords and barons can keep to it [the Tao]" (p. 29).

According to Liu (Chang, 1987), an awareness of the Tao requires purity of the heart: "the descent of sweet dew is purity of the heart" (p. 39). Purity of the heart and sweet dew represent a consciousness that, according to Cleary (1991b),

"is an endless source of intuition, creativity, and inspiration" (p. 2). Liu's and Cleary's interpretations point out the contrast between the two levels of consciousness, the conditioned state when our minds are like the caged quail or frog in the well and an awareness of the Tao when the vital energy is in a pristine state. As Liu (1991) notes, an awareness of the presence of the Tao occurs "when yin and yang completely transform" (p. 249). At that time, "a gentle, clear energy rises" (p. 249) and "spiritual water from the flower pond descends" (p. 249).

Liu's association of the awareness of the Tao and sweet dew guides this exploration to Robinet's (1992/1997) discussion of spiritual water. She claims that in Taoist alchemy, "each of the elements in the task is at once the product of another element and the begetter or perfecter of it, with one containing the other, enwrapping it: it keeps it in the sense of protecting it, or 'veils' it" (p. 240). In the phrase spiritual water, spirit, contained within water, is also the begetter of water. Likewise, water is born of spirit. Robinet's statements carry on the theme of the Taoist doctrine of reversal that was introduced in the prior chapter.

Robinet's discussion of spiritual water, however, is also relevant to this exploration of the metaphors in Chang's (1987) sixth verse. Her findings not only deepen our understanding of the awareness of the Tao and sweet dew but also the symbolism of the dragon and phoenix and the trigrams Fire and Water. These metaphors portray the transformative energy of the Taoist cosmogony and are expressions of the cycle of reversal. In addition, Robinet's discussion of sweet dew identifies another Taoist metaphor associated with the transformative

energy, the food of life. Her following statements on the food of life amplify sweet dew as well as the theme of blended opposites.

Robinet (1992/1997) notes that many Taoist alchemical texts describe the union of saliva with the breath as a union that forms "a little yellow pill with a taste like that of honey, the food of life" (p. 110). The little yellow pill, a union of saliva and breath, is similar to sweet dew because honey is sweet and because it joins two opposites: saliva (water) or Earth and breath (spirit) or Heaven. The food of life is symbolic of water containing breath just as sweet dew represents spirit within water. A similar association is also found in Western alchemical descriptions of the coniunctio, a process that unites the opposites. The following discussion of the caelum is relevant to this study of Chinese alchemy as it contributes to the amplification of sweet dew as well as yellow sprouts.

Caelum

According to Jung (1955-56/1970), one of the tasks of the coniunctio is the production of caelum. Jung defines the caelum as "inner unity" (p. 535) and "the pure, incorrupt, original stuff of the world" (p. 543). Although Jung's finding that the caelum is pure and incorrupt is similar to descriptions of sweeet dew, the component in caelum that is most like sweet dew is honey. Honey is an essential ingredient of the caelum for it is the balsam of life "that permeates all living, budding and growing things" (p. 490). Jung explains the association of honey and the balsam of life: honey "expresses psychologically, the joy of life and the life urge which overcome and eliminate everything dark and inhibiting.

Where spring-like joy and expectation reign, spirit can embrace nature and nature spirit" (p. 490). Jung's statements about honey and the balsam of life correspond to his conclusions regarding the second stage of the coniunctio, the re-union of the united spirit and soul with body, as well as Robinet's discussion of spiritual water.

Jung's interpretation of the state of inner unity in which spirit embraces nature and nature spirit is also found in his earlier study, The Secret of the Golden Flower. In a discussion regarding the degeneration of spirit into intellect, Jung (1957/1967) claims that spirit is higher than the intellect because spirit "embraces the intellect and includes feelings as well" (p. 9). Jung's discussion of the caelum and his differentiation of spirit and intellect correspond to and amplify the Taoist notion of spiritual water. Sweet dew or spiritual water is a metaphor that expresses a psychic state wherein spirit embraces its opposite, body (feelings), and in turn, is embraced by body. The metaphors sweet dew and spiritual water represent a state in which the opposites are united, a state in which there is an awareness of the Tao.

These correspondences reveal another layer of meaning in Chang's verse and bring greater details that elaborate the union of consciousness and the unconscious. Jung's interpretation of honey, an essential ingredient in the production of the caelum, also contributes a psychological perspective to our understanding of sweet dew. Moreover, his discussion of honey is applicable to another metaphor in Chang's (1987) sixth verse, yellow sprouts. The following

discussion takes a closer look at yellow sprouts and sweet dew as states in which opposites are united. Jung identifies these states as united dualities, a significant theme that will be addressed after the amplification of yellow sprouts.

Yellow Sprouts

According to Chang (1987), yellow sprouts grow where the opposites Fire and Water are united. Sprouts symbolize the creative energy that can be observed in the growing and budding of plants and yellow, in Chinese tradition, is the color of earth. Chang's use of the metaphor, yellow sprouts, combines the creative energy of heaven with earth just as sweet dew connects heaven and earth, a union of spirit (heaven) and water (earth). Yellow sprouts, synonymous with the balsam of life, symbolize the union of spirit and body.

Because they unite two opposites, sweet dew and yellow sprouts are united dualities. The following exploration of united dualities first looks at the similarities of yellow sprouts and sweet dew and continues with an examination of ch'i, also a united duality. The exploration of ch'i uncovers intricate details about the vital energy, how it not only eternally creates the universe, but also as do yellow sprouts and sweet dew, permeates the universe in a wide spectrum of forms. A detailed study of ch'i is fundamental for an exploration of the second stage of the alchemical process.

United Dualities

The Tao-te ching notes that sweet dew showers down on earth whereas Kohn (1992) finds that yellow sprouts, "very tender, like the fresh sprouts of plants" (p. 113), also permeate the earth. According to Kohn, the movements of yellow sprouts are described in the Chuang-tzu:

> They assemble at dawn in the celestial capital, from where they spread all over the universe until the sun begins to shine. Turning like the wheels of a carriage, the sprouts first reach the heavenly gates, from where they descend to the world, settle on the five sacred mountains ruled over by the five emperors of the five directions. (p. 113)

Kohn's description of yellow sprouts parallels descriptions of ch'i. Ch'i is a creative energy that, according to Liu (Chang, 1986), "flows in cycles, without beginning or end" (p. 93). The properties of ch'i, yellow sprouts, and sweet dew are those of a transformative energy that moves throughout the universe in a cyclical pattern. The similarities between Chang's metaphors, sweet dew and yellow sprouts, and ch'i guides this exploration of the second stage to a closer examination of this great energy.

The following exploration of ch'i looks at its crucial role in the creation of the universe and consciousness as well as in the alchemical process. Ch'i's characteristics can also found in two motifs that occur in Western alchemy: the Spirit Mercurius and the anima mundi. These two themes are included in this exploration of ch'i because the studies of Mercurius and the anima mundi deepen

our understanding of the second stage of the alchemical process and help to amplify other symbols in Chang's (1987) sixth verse.

Ch'i, an Eternal Process

Ch'i, as Lu (1991) notes, can be observed in the movement of the heavens and the autonomous growth of humans. Ancestor Lu's following description of ch'i highlights its binary nature and is evidence of its similarity to sweet dew and yellow sprouts. According to Lu, in its manifestations in the earthly realm, ch'i exhibits a duality in its positive and negative activities. This is the "power, fuel, the pith of myriad beings, the source of mountain streams; it is lifegiving and killing, activating and storing; it is the passage of time, flourishing and decline, rising and falling, sprouts and sprout sheaths" (p. 74). Ch'i in humans is "energy, physical movement, activity, speech, and perception; it is use of the body, the gateway of death and life" (p. 74).

The correspondences in the descriptions of sweet dew, yellow sprouts, and ch'i are threefold: there is a similarity in movement, all three are associated with the energy of life, and all are united dualities. The source of this creative energy and its binary nature are found in Lao-tzu's (1989) presentation of the Taoist cosmogony (introduced in the literature review):

> The Way gave birth to the One;
>
> The One gave birth to the Two;
>
> And the Two gave birth to the Three;
>
> And the Three gave birth to the ten thousand things.

> The ten thousand things carry Yin on their backs and wrap their arms around Yang. (p. 11)

The Tao-te ching describes the creation of the Two. Its binary nature is a result of its separation from the One.

Schipper (1982/1993) contributes additional information about the origins of ch'i:

> Cosmological and theological concepts place at the beginning of Heaven and Earth Primordial Chaos, called hun-tun: a sphere or matrix that holds within itself the whole universe, but in a diffuse, undifferentiated and potential state. Those are the ch'i, the "breaths" or pure energy-matter which have not yet emerged from chaos, from dark confusion. This primeval matrix is subject nonetheless to the influence of the Tao, to its action of cyclical time. At a given point, the matrix comes to maturity, breaks up, and frees the ch'i (breaths, energies) contained within, which escape and separate. (p. 34)

The separation from the One creates the binary nature of ch'i and the universe whereas its circular movements are due to its spherical origins. In addition, Schipper's description introduces an important element to this study, time. The circular movements of ch'i are manifestations of the Tao's cyclical time.

Graham (Chuang-tzu, 1981) contributes a statement that amplifies Schipper's association of ch'i and the cyclical time of the Tao. According to Graham, "the generation of things from the ultimate root is not an event at the

beginning of time but a continuing process" (p. 156). Time in the Taoist cosmogony does not have a beginning nor an ending but continues eternally. Graham's statement reflects Chuang-tzu's position, noted above, that the cycles of ch'i have neither beginning nor ending. Cyclical time is associated with the creation of the universe and the movement of reversal, recurrent motifs in this study. Cyclical time, as we shall see, is also a crucial element in the final stage of the alchemical process. However, this discussion will focus on cyclical time and its association with the cosmic energy, ch'i.

Cosmic Ch'i

The preceding discussion of ch'i determines its origins and its relationship to cyclical time. Many Taoist scholars including the preeminent Ancestor Lu have studied ch'i. This discussion of ch'i not only clarifies its characteristics but also its role in the Taoist cosmogony. In Robinet's (1992/1997) description of ch'i, she identifies a prior to heaven aspect to this astounding energy:

> A basic dynamic, Qi [ch'i], which is neither matter nor spirit, existed before the world did, and everything that exists is only an aspect of it, in a lesser or greater state of condensation. Condensed, it becomes life, diluted, it is indefinite potential; this concept dates back to Zhuangzi, and was reiterated by all classical Chinese thinkers down to the time of the neo-Confucianists in the Song. It is described as a force that expands and animates the world in a turning motion by which it spreads and distributes itself into every corner of space and time. (p. 7)

Robinet's discussion identifies three themes that are important to this study.

The first motif is the two kinds of time, a time prior to the creation of the universe and a time after the creation of the universe. Ch'i, present prior to the creation of universe, participates in the cosmic creation of the world: a creative act of separation from the primordial unity. Second, Robinet's findings on the creative act also carry on the theme of separation identified in Chapter 2: separation as a creative act. The act of separation occurs through the force of cosmic ch'i. Third, Robinet's discussion develops the theme of reversals and reflects the notion that the vital energy alternates between states of condensation and states of dilution. The following discussion, based on the Chuang-tzu, also recognizes this property of ch'i.

Graham's (Chuang-tzu, 1981) definition of ch'i brings greater details of not only its circulations but also its transformative movements:

> In the first place, the breath, alternating between motion and stillness, extended in space but insubstantial, although condensing to become visible on a frosty day. The ch'i is conceived as becoming solider the more slowly it moves, with more tenuous circulating within and energising the inert, for example as the ching 'quintessence', the vitalising fluid in the living body. In its ultimate degree of firmness we could think of it in Western terms as pure energy. (p. 156)

Ch'i, an eternal process, moves and circulates throughout the universe in a full spectrum of speeds and forms. Also apparent in Graham's description of ch'i is a

theme that was introduced in the prior chapter: a cosmic energy that manifests in different forms or phases.

Although Ancestor Lu as well as Taoist scholars such as Robinet tell us about the different forms of ch'i, Blofeld (1978) differentiates three phases in the manifestations of ch'i: cosmic, subtle, and coarse. According to Blofeld, the coarse form of ch'i is "not precisely identical but closely associated with, and conveyed in, the air breathed in through lungs, kidneys, and pores" (p. 131). It has been described as "wind that stirred within chaos preceding the universe's birth" (p. 145). As part of the air that we breathe, coarse ch'i is the form most closely associated with our bodies. Subtle ch'i is "vitality indistinguishable (except by temporary location) from its cosmic counterpart" (p. 131). Subtle and cosmic ch'i are the more ethereal forms of ch'i. Cosmic ch'i is "cosmic vitality seen as te, the virtue of the Tao with which each object is imbued" (p. 131). Te is defined as the power or effectiveness of the Tao. Te will be revisited in a following discussion of the anima mundi and in the last chapter of this study.

References to ch'i are not included in Jung's (1957/1967) commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower but Jung was aware of the Chinese notion of ch'i. He describes ch'i on page 324 of "The Philosophical Tree (1954/1967a) and in Mysterium Coniunctionis (1955-56/1970) as "air, spirit, ethereal essence" (p. 237). Jung refers to these aspects of ch'i in his later alchemical study to support his findings about divine water. His statement that the various essences of divine water "are likened to 'spring showers in abundance'" (p. 237) is

reminiscent of sweet dew, but Jung does not pursue the subject of sweet dew nor the origins of ch'i. However, Jung's study of Mercurius identifies many characteristics that parallel the aforementioned descriptions of ch'i.

Mercurius

Jung's study of Mercurius is included here because his psychological interpretations of Mercurius enhance our understanding of ch'i and our understanding of the joining of Heaven and Earth, a metaphor in Chang's (1987) sixth verse that is associated with the second stage of the alchemical process. Jung's interpretation also contributes to the exploration of united dualities, whereas Burckhardt's discussion of Mercurius supports the parallels of Mercurius and ch'i. As we shall see, the similarities between Mercurius and ch'i also occur with the anima mundi, the soul of the world.

The Spirit in the Bottle

In his study of Mercurius, Jung (1948/1967) identifies situations where there is a unity of opposites such as the "contrary qualities of water and fire" (p. 216) and finds that these are psychological states "best characterized by (or, indeed, actually demanding) an antinomian nomenclature" (p. 216). For Jung, "the psychologem 'Mercurius'" (p. 216) possesses such "an essentially antinomian dual nature" (p. 216) because it unites the opposites within it. Not only do Mercurius and ch'i unite the opposites, another correspondence can be found in Chang's (1987) rhetorical question about the homes of the frog and quail and Jung's analysis of the fairy tale, "The Spirit in the Bottle."

In his interpretation of the fairy tale, Jung (1948/1967) posits that the spirit is Mercurius who represents the creative energy, the energy of life. In this tale, a spirit has been trapped in a bottle that is found amongst an oak tree's roots. Because it is in that location, Jung concludes that the spirit is the life principle of the tree that "would have developed freely under natural conditions but was robbed of its freedom by deliberate intervention from the outside" (p. 196). His interpretation parallels the situation of the frog and quail in Chang's (1987) sixth verse. The ch'i, that is, the life principle of the frog and quail are likewise restricted and therefore cannot develop and evolve as it would in its natural state.

A Life Principle

Another correspondence between Mercurius and the vital energy, ch'i, can be found in Jung's (1948/1967) statement that Mercurius is the progenitor of sprouts. This description of Mercurius identifies its similarities to Chang's (1987) metaphor, yellow sprouts, both in the use of the term sprouts and its life-giving aspects. This quality of Mercurius is highlighted in Jung's discussion of the Paracelsan notion of the Iliaster. The Iliaster is the balsam or "the life principle, the spiritus mercurii" (p. 135). Here, Jung identifies the seed of the Iliastric soul as "the spirit of God himself" (p. 136) and adds that "not only is it the life-giver, it is the psychopomp in the mystic transformation, leading the way to incorruptibility or immortality" (p. 136). Jung's description of Mercurius' transformative qualities corresponds not only to Chang's metaphor of yellow

sprouts but also to the dragon and the phoenix as well as sweet dew. Although Jung does not write of these transformative and life-giving properties in his discussions of ch'i, his study of Mercurius helped him to define a transformative life principle.

Vital Water

Jung (1948/1967) identifies another aspect of Mercurius' life-giving qualities in his association of Mercurius with quicksilver, that is, "the 'divine water' so often mentioned in the Greek texts" (p. 208). Burckhardt (1960/1967) also associates the transformative quality of Mercurius with water. He states that Mercurius is known as the "water of life" (p. 146) and "is the spring in which sun and moon, spirit, and soul must bathe in order to be rejuvenated" (p. 146). These descriptions of Mercurius support another of its correspondences with ch'i, insofar as ch'i is associated with water because it flows and showers down as sweet dew and is spiritual water. Mercurius, sweet dew, and ch'i are transformative energies that are life-giving.

Vital Air

Mercurius and ch'i are also associated with air. Ch'i, literally translated as breath and air, corresponds to that part of Mercurius whose antecedent is a wind god. Jung (1948/1967) identifies Hermes as the wind god from whom Mercurius evolved. Jung refers to early alchemical texts that often refer to "Mercurius as pneuma and spiritus in the original concrete sense of 'air in motion'" (p. 212).

Mercurius in its guise as air is a symbol of the soul as the following discussion reveals.

For Jung (1934/1969), several words "show clearly how in Latin, Greek, and Arabic the names given to the soul are related to the notion of moving air, the 'cold breath of the spirits'" (p. 345). Jung (1954/1960) adds that Mercurius as soul represents "a higher concept than 'spirit' in the sense of air or gas. As the 'subtle body' or 'breath-soul' it means something non-material and finer than mere air. Its essential characteristic is to animate and be animated; it therefore represents the life principle" (p. 213). As a "spirit in the incorporeal, metaphysical sense" (p. 215), Mercurius possesses the qualities of a vital energy.

Burckhardt (1960/1967) interprets Mercurius similarly in his discussion of Mercurius as spiritus. According to Burckhardt, spiritus does not mean transcendent spirit, but the "vital spirit." As vital spirit, it is

> the subtle power which unites the individual soul with the body and the corporeal world as a whole. The 'vital spirit' corresponds to Quicksilver because it is only partially and loosely attached to the sphere of the ego, and thus represents a still formable materia. (pp. 140-141)

Burckhardt's discussion of Mercurius explains how Mercurius can represent both soul and spirit.

Not only does Mercurius represent soul and spirit, Mercurius has a prior to corporeal quality, one of the aspects of ch'i. Burckhardt (1960/1967) credits

Fra Marcantonio for this conclusion about Mercurius as <u>spiritus</u>. Fra Marcantonio states the following:

> I know well that your secret Quicksilver is nothing other than a living, omnipresent and innate spirit which, in the form of an aery haze (a subtle influence) continually descends from heaven to earth (and to earthly man), in order to fill the earth's porous body. I know that it is subsequently born among the impure Sulphurs (the corporeal substances), so that having had a volatile nature, it may acquire a firm (i. e. immutable) one, and that by doing this it takes on the form of primordial humidity (<u>humiditas radicalis</u>). (p. 143)

Marcantonio's discussion about Mercurius reveals several parallels with <u>ch'i</u>: its aerial quality, its movement from heaven to the earth, and its having a prior to corporeal occurrence.

According to Burckhardt (1960/1967), as pneuma, Mercurius is "taken in by beings as is the air in breathing. It is the constant nourishment of the subtle 'body' of their vital powers" (p. 141). As vital spirit it is the "substance which 'flows' in all psychic and mental forms" (p. 142) and extends through cosmic space. Burckhardt's discussion supports the associations of Mercurius and <u>ch'i</u> as pneuma, vital spirit, and transformative energy. These descriptions of the qualities of Mercurius and correspondences to <u>ch'i</u> highlight their transformative qualities. Mercurius, as is <u>ch'i</u>, is found in various guises that reflect its intermediary nature. The following discussion looks at this aspect of Mercurius

and its correspondences with ch'i in order to amplify our understanding of the transformations that occur during the Chinese alchemical process.

An Intermediary

Burckhardt's (1960/1967) descriptions of Mercurius have similarities to not only ch'i but also ching and shen:

> On the corporeal level, Quicksilver is present in blood and semen. On a somewhat higher level--intermediate between body and soul--it is in the heart and the breath. The latter is so to say the bearer of the 'substance' of the soul. Its rhythm is the image of the 'solidification' of this substance within the field of force of the ego-consciousness, and of its eventual dissolution in the All. The substance of the soul, for its part, is the bearer of a spiritual reality. (pp. 141-142)

Burckhardt's discussion parallels Blofeld's (1978) differentiation of coarse ching that is "associated with, and conveyed by, the male and female sexual fluids" (p. 131) and coarse ch'i that is "associated with, and conveyed in, the air breathed in through lungs, kidneys and pores" (p. 131). The associations of Mercurius and ching with sexual fluids and vital spirit, that is, ch'i, not only exemplify their life-giving powers but support the notion that this energy is transformative and condenses into consciousness. The condensation of vital energy, noted earlier in Robinet's and Chuang-tzu's descriptions of ch'i, will be further addressed in a discussion on the creation of images in Chapter 5. The focus for the present is on

the similarities in the roles of Mercurius and the vital energy as the intermediaries of body and spirit.

Both Burckhardt, noted above, and Jung (1948/1967) conclude that Mercurius is a creative energy that is an intermediary. For Jung, Mercurius is "a 'life-giving power like glue, holding the world together and standing in the middle between body and spirit'" (p. 213). The correspondence between Mercurius and ch'i as intermediaries can be extended to the anima mundi. The following exploration of the anima mundi carries on the similarities in the intermediaries of Chinese and Western alchemy as well as the theme of united dualities.

The Anima Mundi

The correspondence between Mercurius and the anima mundi, the soul of the world, is documented in Jung's (1948/1967) study of Mercurius. According to Jung, "another text says that Mercurius is the 'supercelestial spirit which is conjoined with the light, and rightly can be called the anima mundi'" (p. 214). The association of Mercurius and the anima mundi extends to ch'i for ch'i is also identified as a life-giving energy that has an intermediate nature, being neither matter nor spirit. The following discussion focuses on Bruno's findings of the anima mundi in order to deepen our understanding of ch'i. The exploration will support the correspondences of the anima mundi and ch'i and facilitate a closer look at their components and at the relationships of their parts. The exploration

of the <u>anima</u> <u>mundi</u> also further addresses how the vital energy is associated with consciousness.

According to Mendoza (1995), Bruno offers an account of the <u>anima</u> <u>mundi</u> that explains how the human mind can "discover the universe as a whole" (p. 9). Although Bruno is not an alchemical scholar, Mendoza provides the following reasons for recognizing Bruno, who links ancient and contemporary cosmologists, as the "real founder of contemporary cosmology" (p. <u>xii</u>):

> It was Bruno who, for the first time in history of thought, both Western and Oriental, clearly and explicitly formulated precisely three fundamental metaphysical assumptions of contemporary cosmology: the unity of the universe, its uniformity, homogeneity and isotrophy, and the universal validity and applicability of its laws. (p. <u>xii</u>)

Bruno's findings of the <u>anima</u> <u>mundi</u> are included here because, as does the above interpretations of Mercurius, they deepen our understanding of <u>ch'i</u> and help to amplify the metaphors in Chang's (1987) sixth verse.

<u>Universal Movement and Universal Mind</u>

In his comprehensive study of the <u>anima</u> <u>mundi</u>, Bruno analyzes the intrinsic principle of motion and eternal flow of the universe from the ancient philosophies of Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, Epicurus, Lucretius, and the Stoics. He derives his model of the soul of the universe from Plato, Plotinus, and the Stoics. According to Mendoza (1995), Bruno defines the Stoic notion of the soul of the universe in his following conclusion about universal movement:

> Movement, he argued, does not come to bodies from outside; they have it in themselves, for everybody is animated by its own internal principle of motion, its 'soul', the cosmic soul present in everything without suffering division or fragmentation. Not only is this soul in every single body, but it animates all the elementary particles of matter as well. (p. 83)

For Bruno, everything has a soul. This includes even the celestial bodies: "like all animals, they too, are capable of moving themselves" (p. 84). The cosmic soul animates all bodies.

Bruno's notion of an animating principle has correspondences with the cosmic vitality (te) of ch'i. As Mendoza (1995) notes, this animating principle also known as soul is a self-steering power. Bruno derives the source of this power from Epicurus and Lucretius: "elementary indivisible particles called atoms" (p. 82) that are the building blocks of an infinite, eternal universe. Although Bruno maintains that the elementary particles were automotive and self-steering, he differs from the Classical Greek perspective of atomism. Bruno's atoms do not randomly collide and stick together "once a viable form was reached" (p. 83).

For Bruno (Mendoza, 1995), the self-steering power of the atoms is evidence of universal logos or nous (mind). This notion is derived from Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, and the Stoics:

> Bodies not only have in themselves their own principle of movement, soul, but also the principle of cognition and choice, that is mind.

> Everything, then, in the universe is moved by the cosmic soul and steered by the cosmic mind. (p. 85)

The movement of the universal soul is purposeful: there is universal animation and universal mind. The cosmic mind works in unison with the cosmic soul just as yang complements yin.

According Mendoza (1995), Bruno reaches the following conclusion about the cosmic mind, which he asserts is

> most certainly present in nature, indeed immanent in it, since it thoroughly pervades it; but if nature never reaches the perfection of the divine mind, and hence is never an exact reproduction thereof, then it cannot be totally identified with it. (p. 139)

The cosmic mind is not identical to nature or matter but is present in it.

Bruno's finding that the universal intellect is immanent in universal soul is similar to the Taoist view, documented in The Secret of the Golden Flower (Cleary, 1991b), that spirit or intellect is concealed in the higher soul. Not only is the universal mind contained in universal soul; Mendoza (1995) claims that it is the universal intellect that energizes the anima mundi:

> According to Bruno, the universal intellect is an inherent power (potenza) of the universal soul; it is both the efficient physical cause and intrinsic principle of everything that exists in the universe, and it operates from the inside as an internal artificer (artifice interno) which 'from inside the trunk drives out the branches, from inside the branches the formed twigs, from

> inside these unfolds the buds, from inside it forms shapes, weaves, like nerves, the foliage, the flowers, the fruits.' (p. 127)

The anima mundi is an "inextricable union of the infinite cosmic mind with the infinite universe" (p. 141). An immanent mind moves matter.

The Relationship Between Mind (Yang) and Matter (Yin)

Correspondences can be found in Bruno's study of the anima mundi and Burckhardt's (1960/1967) discussion of matter and form. Burckhardt's discussion of matter is included here because it expands our understanding of the immanence of mind in matter. According to Burckhardt, matter "is in itself altogether without form. All that it has is quantity, pure quantity" (p. 63). On the other hand, form can be the outward shape but it can also be the form-giving cause that "impresses its stamp on matter" (p. 62). In this situation, the form-giving cause is the essence of a thing and is the active pole of existence whereas matter, in receiving the form-giving cause, gives it finite existence and is its polar opposite.

Burckhardt (1960/1967) claims that essence as the form-giving cause corresponds to Pure Act. His statement, in turn, parallels Bruno's finding about the cosmic mind that is the power behind the animating principle. Another correspondence can be found between Bruno's position that universal mind cannot be separated from the universal soul and Burckhardt's view that the cause (form) cannot be separated from receptive substance for they "complement one another reciprocally" (p. 64). The anima mundi is a union of opposites: form-

giving cause and receptive substance just as yin receives the form-giving cause of yang in ch'i.

The Two Poles of Soul

Burckhardt's (1960/1967) discussion of the relationship between mind and matter addresses the binary nature of soul. Like matter, the passive side of soul manifests through "its capacity to take on and maintain forms, that is to say, in its pure and illimitable 'receptivity'" (p. 69). According to Burckhardt, the active side of the soul is the essential pole of the soul:

> The 'forms' taken on by the 'substance' or 'material' side of the soul comes from without as well as from within. This means that empirically they come from without, through the senses. They are essential forms only in so far as they correspond to the immutable prototypes contained in the Intellect, which constitute the real content of all knowledge. The essential pole of the soul is thus the Intellect (or Spirit). It is its 'form'. (p. 69)

Burckhardt's discussion elaborates the contrast between an important pair of opposites in Complete Reality Taoism, essence and sense, or mind and body. Although the association of sense and body is more easily understood, Burckhardt's discussion clarifies that substance or matter receives archetypal forms, essence. His notion of Intellect or spirit, as a form-giving cause, amplifies the Complete Reality Taoism notion of essence, "the basic nature of consciousness" (Chang, 1987, p. 14) or the nature of the mind. Essence is the

cause of the forms that are received through the senses and as such, has a complementary relationship with its opposite.

This exploration of the metaphors in Chang's (1987) sixth verse identifies parallels in ch'i, sweet dew, yellow sprouts, the dragon, the phoenix, and psychological states known as united dualities. In Western alchemy, united dualities include soul, Mercurius, and the anima mundi. The following diagram summarizes these correspondences:

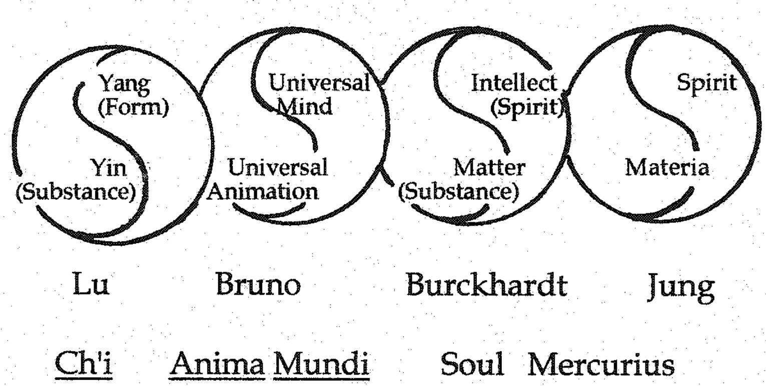


Figure 4. United Dualities

The digram in Figure 4, based on amplifications of the symbols in Chang's (1987) sixth verse, illustrates the similarities in Chinese and Western alchemical thought: Ancestor Lu's description that ch'i, an intermediary, unites substance and form corresponds to both Bruno's and Burckhardt's findings of the anima mundi and Jung's description of Mercurius. Although Lu uses yin and yang and substance and form to describe the two poles of ch'i, he is describing an energy

that parallels the anima mundi. Yin corresponds with the receptive materia and Bruno's animating principle whereas yang is the analog of inherent power and the cosmic mind. The anima mundi and ch'i are synonymous. These correspondences contribute details that deepen our understanding not only of ch'i but also of a psychological state in which consciousness and the unconscious have re-united, united dualities.

The parallels also point out the prominence of united dualities in Chang's (1987) sixth verse and highlight their associations with levels of knowing. The correspondences also identify additional details about the two opposites that are united and set the foundation for the following discussion of the second stage of the alchemical process. The exploration of the second stage not only focuses on refining ch'i but also a third level of knowing, a flexible consciousness

Heaven and Earth Join

Thus far, the analysis of the metaphors in Chang's (1987) sixth verse reveals the presence of the cycles of vital energy in united dualities such as the dragon, the phoenix, sweet dew, and yellow sprouts. Chang does not specifically refer to the vital energy as ch'i nor does he identify the tasks of the second stage but presents pairs of opposites and the alchemical process in its entirety just as he did in his fourth verse. In addition to the metaphors that have been amplified thus far, Chang describes the second stage in terms of I Ching trigrams, the joining of Heaven and Earth and the mixing of Fire and Water. In

the following discussion that continues the exploration of the second stage, other Taoists contribute data that address the refining of the vital energy and amplify Chang's metaphors, when Heaven and Earth join and Fire and Water mix.

Refining Ch'i

According to Wong (1997b), refining ch'i is the transforming of "vital energy into vapor" (p. 70). Her description indicates that ching is transformed to a more refined or subtle form during the second stage of the alchemical process. For Schipper (1982/1993), the second stage is a transcendence where "all the faculties of the senses: our eyes, nose, breasts, hands, come together in total participation" (p. 154). Robinet (1992/1997) considers the second or middle level of the alchemical task as "less physical and more psychological" (p. 252). Refining chi is an act that nourishes and accumulates creative energy.

The first stage works to quiet the body whereas the second stage brings the mental and the physical faculties to a state of stillness, a focus on the mental. That is, eliminating all mundane thoughts that appear and allowing the vital energy, ch'i, to arise in the stillness. According to Blofeld (1978), "with the transmutation of ching [essence] into ch'i [vitality], the first barrier is passed and perfect stillness of body supervenes" (p. 133). Then, ch'i flows naturally and yin transforms to yang and vice versa. When the cycles of ch'i reverse it is a turning around of the "very energy of Creation" (Cleary, 1991b, p. 18). The reversal of ch'i brings the union of the antithetical elements, Fire and Water, as well as Heaven and Earth.

The Secret of the Golden Flower (Cleary, 1991b) propounds that turning the energy of creation around is equivalent to "keeping to the center" (p. 18) and defines the center as omnipresent because "the whole universe is within you" (p. 19). Schipper (1982/1993) agrees for he claims that Fire and Water are "united at the Center and from this Center it radiates and spreads throughout the whole body" (p. 154). The state of stillness accumulates the vital energy in the center of the practitioner that is also a plane that is the center of knowing for it looks in both directions: outward toward the material world and inner toward the spiritual world. The following discussion looks at the center of knowing.

A Flexible Consciousness

For Cleary (Chang, 1987), the blending of yin and yang is a psychic occurrence: it is the blending of the two levels of knowing:

> The joining of these two means that the flexible consciousness, instead of conforming to the arbitrary influences of history and environment, is stabilized by the firmness of real knowledge. Without conscious knowing, it is said, there is no point of access to real knowing; without real knowing, on the other hand, there is no stable objectivity of consciousness. (p. 6)

The union of the two levels of consciousness or psychological states re-unifies the opposites resulting in a state of wholeness. As Burckhardt (1960/1967) succinctly states, this is "a knowledge of unity" (p. 142). Psychologically, Jung

(1957/1967) defines the union as a new attitude: "an attitude that accepts the irrational and the incomprehensible simply because it is happening" (p. 17).

The union of mind and matter takes place on a plane that mediates between the two opposites. On this plane, the retrograde evolution of the vital energy begins, thus creating a tension between the opposites that insures the flow of energy and continual alternation between the two. The Taoist notion of the cycles of ch'i, an alternating energy, may well explain von Franz's (1980) concern that "we never know how our descriptions of the unconscious are combined with matter, which creates the whole conflict between inner and outer" (p. 146). The tension created by the two opposites results in a paradoxical situation that manifests as a paradoxical consciousness, one open to both views. This consciousness is a combination of an outward perspective that is stabilized with inner knowing. Figure 5 shows where Heaven and Earth join:

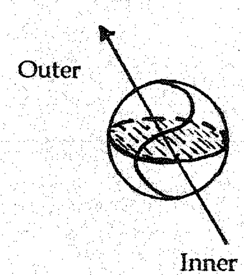


Figure 5. The Center of Yin and Yang

Instead of the one-sided focus to the outer, our usual view, the joining of Heaven and Earth reverses the outward focus to an inner, a reversal that meets on the plane of the soul. According to Complete Reality Taoism, this occurs only through an awareness of the Tao. After the descent that occurs in the first stage, continued refining of the vital energy results in the meeting of the two polar opposites, human consciousness with celestial knowledge. The second stage of the alchemical process brings the practitioner to the center of yin and yang: sweet dew descends, yellow sprouts grow, and Heaven and Earth join.

Summary

This circumambulation of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process focuses on the second stage and reveals the deeper meanings in Chang's (1987) verse. As in the exploration of the first stage of the alchemical process, Chang's sixth verse is separated from his complete text followed by a second separation of the metaphors of homes, the creatures who live in those homes, sweet dew, and yellow sprouts from the complete verse. The amplification of homes carries on the theme of the first stage, the necessity of the human body in the alchemical process, and prepares a foundation for identification of the recurring theme of Chang's sixth verse, the psychic nature of the alchemical process.

The refining of the symbols in Chang's text develops this theme through an exploration of ch'i. The vital energy ch'i is an outstanding example of a psychological state known as a united duality. In terms of Complete Reality

Taoism, ch'i is a union of essence and life. A study of ch'i's similarities with two other united dualities, the Spirit Mercurius and the anima mundi, clarifies the ability of the vital energy to transform from a condensed state, life, to a diluted or ethereal state, essence. These two states reflect the binary nature of ch'i: its passive and receptive side is associated with matter and the body, whereas its active side is a form-giving cause that is associated with the intellect and spirit. These two sides are, in turn, associated with two levels of consciousness: conscious knowing that is the result of learning and an innate wisdom that is called the mind of Tao. In the previous chapter, these two levels are referred to as Fire and Water.

The first stage of the alchemical process focuses on the body, whereas the second stage of the alchemical process intensifies the psychic aspects of the alchemical tasks. In the second stage, the transformation of the vital energy produces a flexible or paradoxical consciousness, a new attitude. Although Jung (1957/1967) describes the Chinese alchemical process as a reversal, this exploration of the second stage of the reversal process adds another motif that can facilitate our understanding of the doctrine of reversals and the Taoist cosmogony, united dualities. The amplification of the symbols in Chang's (1987) sixth verse also bring a deeper understanding of the transformations of the energy ch'i from body or matter to mind, or spirit that sets the foundation for an exploration of the final stage, the production of the gold elixir.

CHAPTER 4

RIDE A FLYING PHOENIX

Gold

This study of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) is also an alchemical process for it unites two opposites: the outer, Chang's instruction for knowing inversion, the writings of Taoist scholars, and Western alchemical studies with the inner, personal reflections. The process of blending the opposites continues in the following exploration of the third stage, refining shen, and begins with a separation: the selection of a verse from Understanding Reality that will reveal details of the final stage of the alchemical process. The rationale for selecting Verse 3, Part 1 will be presented prior to an analogical analysis of the metaphors in the selected verse. As it did in the prior chapter, the number Three guides the selection of the verse.

Chapter 3 carries on the theme of reversal that emerged in Chapter 2 and identifies the source of the reversals, the vital energy, ch'i. In this chapter, a third circumambulation of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987), the theme of ch'i is carried on in an exploration of the symbolism of gold. Not only is it important to understand the association of gold and ch'i but the symbolism of gold is linked with two other themes that are significant in the final stage, the unity of macrocosm and microcosm and the mastery of time. Time has been mentioned in prior discussions of ch'i but the following exploration of gold takes a closer look at the different kinds of time and the role of time in the alchemical process.

A study of two kinds of time, physical and eternal, brings greater elaboration to the theme of the union of the two opposites. As opposites, eternal time and physical time are united in the final stage of the alchemical process.

Descriptions of this experience enrich Jung's (1957/1967) statements about a detached consciousness, his term for the goal of the alchemical process. Although Jung does not include a detailed account of a detached consciousness in his first alchemical study, his later study of the coniunctio emphasizes the spiritual nature of the alchemical process. Jung's discussion of the experience of the unus mundus, the final stage of the coniunctio, will be included in this analysis of the final stage of the Taoist alchemical process because his psychological interpretation is relevant to our understanding of the alchemical goal. Discussions on the psychological and spiritual aspects of the third and final stage precede a look at the varying descriptions of the experiences of immortality, the ultimate goal. This chapter concludes with an exploration of spiritual consciousness and a look at the hierarchical relationship of the two opposites that are united, a model for all relationships

Selection of Verse

The process of selecting a verse that focuses on the final stage of the alchemical process from Chang's (1987) complete text, as it has in Chapters 2 and 3, is a separation from the original state of wholeness. Chang, who does not explicitly identify each of the stages of the refining process, refers to the goal in many ways and in many verses. The selection of Chang's third verse, is guided

by the reoccurrence of the number Three in this study. The three creation myths that describe a threefold process in which the universe and consciousness are created include the creation myths of the Tao, Ruysbroek's threefold unity, and the creation myth of Basilides. In addition, the number Three is inherent in the doctrine of the Three Treasures and the three-stage alchemical process. In his third verse, Chang names the goal in three ways, celestial immortality, gold elixir, and the achievement, and presents three obvious themes.

Chang's (1987) Verse 3, Part 1 is as follows:

> IF YOU ARE GOING TO STUDY IMMORTALITY, YOU SHOULD STUDY CELESTIAL IMMORTALITY; ONLY THE GOLD ELIXIR IS WORTHWHILE. WHEN THE TWO THINGS JOIN, SENSE AND ESSENCE MERGE. WHEN THE FIVE ELEMENTS ARE COMPLETED, THE TIGER AND DRAGON INTERTWINE. STARTING WITH HEAVEN-EARTH AND EARTH-EARTH AS GO-BETWEENS, FINALLY THEY HAVE HUSBAND AND WIFE CONJOIN HAPPILY. JUST WAIT FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT TO BE COMPLETED TO PAY COURT TO THE NORTH PALACE GATE; IN THE LIGHT OF NINE-FOLD MIST YOU RIDE A FLYING PHOENIX. (p. 28)

The three easily discernible themes include (1) the goal of the opus that is explicit in Chang's first and last lines of this verse; (2) the union of opposites that appears in the second and third lines; (3) the go-betweens, the subject of the third line. There are three lines about pairs of opposites: (a) the "two things" and sense and

essence; (b) the Five Elements and the tiger and dragon; and (c) the go-betweens and husband and wife. Verse 3, Part 1, is selected as a verse that reveals details about the final stage of the alchemical quest.

The use of a multitude of names for the goal is common in both Western and Chinese alchemy. Fischer-Schreiber (1986/1996) finds that for Chinese alchemy, the gold elixir "is synonymous with the sacred embryo and the golden flower of Inner Alchemy" (p. 22). Wong (1997b) refers to the alchemical goal as the golden pill and the Immortal Fetus, whereas Blofeld (1978) propounds that the ultimate goal is a return to the Source, the Tao. In addition to the aforementioned names, Chang (1987) refers to the goal as the Great Elixir, the Mysterious Jewel, production of the medicine, and Bright Pearl. In Western alchemy, names for the goal include the Philosopher's Stone, the Elixir of Life, and the universal medicine. Despite the many names for the alchemical goal, most alchemists agree that gold, a metal valued for its purity, is a symbol of the goal. The following discussion looks at the symbolism of gold and its role as the foundation of the unity of the macrocosm and the microcosm, a motif first introduced in the literature review.

Sacred Gold

Liu (Chang, 1987), abiding with Chang's recommendation to "study celestial immortality" (p. 28), claims that "the great science of gold elixir" (p. 29) is the only method for achieving immortality. For Liu, the gold elixir is "another name for the unfragmented original essence; there is no gold elixir

besides the original essence" (p. 30). In addition, the gold elixir is "innate knowledge and innate capacity received by humans from heaven--it is completely good, with nothing bad in it; the completely perfect spiritual faculty, it is formed of a coagulation of primordial positive energy" (p. 29). Liu's definition of the gold elixir, as the following discussion of the transmutability of gold will demonstrate, refers to the vital energy born of the Tao. Although ch'i is not mentioned by name in Chang's third verse, Liu's statement identifies its centrality in the return to the Void, yet another name for the final stage of the Taoist alchemical process.

Liu's (Chang, 1987) above position about the gold elixir exemplifies his dedication to "removing obscurities" (p. 2) in Chinese alchemical literature. For Liu, "gold is something incorruptible; elixir is a symbol for blending without hindrance" (p. 29). Liu's attempt to remove the mysticism in Chang's text constricts rather than amplifies the symbolism of gold. However, other alchemical scholars tell us about the mystery and sacred nature of gold and gold's role as the representation of "perfection of both metallic and human existence" (Burckhardt, 1960/1967, p. 24). Their writings contribute to the following amplification of gold.

Transmutability of Gold

Gold is central to alchemy, both Western and Chinese, for alchemists have long valued gold as much for its symbolism as its material qualities. The ability of gold to represent perfection on more than one level is its hallmark as a true

symbol. According to Burckhardt (1960/1967), a "true symbol depends on the fact that things, which may differ from one another in time, space, material nature, and many other limitative characteristics, can possess and exhibit the same essential quality" (p. 12). As Burckhardt asserts,

> gold is a 'body' like other metals, but the mass, density and divisibility of bodies have in it been transmuted into pure, symbolical quality. It is incarnated light. The alchemists themselves often describe the goal of their work as a 'volatilization of the solid and a solidification of the volatile' or as a 'spiritualization of the body and an embodiment of the spirit'. Gold is nothing else but this. (pp. 82-83)

Not only is gold a symbol of perfection, beneath its symbolism is the archetype of reversal: the transformation of spirit or primordial energy to body and vice versa. Gold epitomizes the doctrine of reversal. Reversal is the basis of the "parallel between the transmutation of the gross powers of the body and mind into pure spirit and that of base metals into the pure element of gold" (Blofeld, 1978, p. 116).

According to Burckhardt (1960/1967), the symbolism of gold can be traced to ancient beliefs about gold and silver:

> Gold and silver were already sacred metals, even before they became the measure of all commercial transactions. They are the earthly reflections of sun and moon, and thus also of all the realities of spirit and soul which are related to the heavenly pair. (p. 11)

Gold is sacred because it is the embodiment of primordial energy. Burckhardt's statement that gold is incarnated light parallels Liu's claim that gold is congealed primordial energy. This exploration of the symbolism of gold associates its transmutability with the cycles of ch'i, its reversals from body to spirit and vice versa. Moreover, gold can also symbolize ch'i. The prior analysis of ch'i highlights the notion that ch'i occurs in both ourselves and in the universe. The amplification of gold develops this theme by exploring the association of gold and the unity of the macrocosm and the microcosm. The following discussions by Eliade, Jung, and Burckhardt address the association of gold and human beings.

The Macrocosm and Microcosm

Eliade (1956/1962) acknowledges that the relationship between gold and people is based on the Chinese belief that the elixir, "(that is, the Philosopher's Stone) has the characteristics both of a metal and an embryo" (p. 121). In other words, the gold elixir possesses the qualities of gold that has been transformed from a base metal and human beings who develop from an embryonic stage in their mothers' wombs. This similarity between gold and people is central to alchemical thought:

> The respective processes of growth (of both metal and embryo) can be accelerated miraculously by achieving the state of maturity and perfection at the mineral level of existence (i. e. by producing gold) and also--more particularly--on the human level, by producing the Elixir of Immortality.

> For as we have seen, thanks to the unity of microcosm-macrocosm, both levels correspond with one another. (pp. 121, 124)

As noted in the literature review, early alchemists viewed nature as a living organism: every item in nature has a life cycle just as human beings do.

Jung's (1954/1967b) following discussion of the personification of the macrocosm contributes another perspective to the theme of nature as a living organism. Jung finds that the personification of the macrocosm is the result of an archaic psychology known as participation mystique that "reflects a twilight state of consciousness" (p. 92). This consciousness is demonstrated in "folk tales of imps and goblins" (p. 93) and has endured through the centuries because these tales have been passed by word of mouth and unlike traditional symbolism, have not been subjected to purging. Jung refers to the following passage as an example of the personification of the macrocosm:

> And as man is composed of the four elements, so also is the stone, and so it is [dug] out of man, and you are its ore, namely by working; and from you is extracted, namely by division; and in you it remains inseparably, namely through the science. (pp. 93-94)

Jung's citation reflects the alchemical position that metals, the macrocosm, and humans, the microcosm, are similar: both are congealed primordial essence and both can be transmuted to a state as pure as gold. In short, the alchemical process transforms the impure form of the essence in both human beings and metals.

The correspondence of human beings and metals is a basic alchemical principle that was addressed in the prior literature review and in this discussion of the microcosm and macrocosm. It is also succinctly propounded in the Emerald Tablet (Tabula Smaragdina), accepted by medieval alchemists as a revelation of Hermes Trismegistos. According to Jung (1963/1989), the Emerald Tablet is part of an alchemical legend in which Hermes "was said to have left behind him a tablet upon which the basic tenets of alchemical wisdom is engraved" (p. 172). The Emerald Tablet describes the unity of the macrocosm and microcosm as follows: "whatever is below is like that which is above, and whatever is above is like that which is below" (Burckhardt, 1960/1967, p. 196). The unity of the macrocosm and microcosm is exemplified in the similarity of humans and metals. Chang's (1987) metaphor about the world being in our bodies, mentioned previously, is another reference to this unity.

Jung's above discussion of the personification of the macrocosm and Chang's metaphor speak of the universality of this notion but also point out a contrast between Western and Taoist perspectives. Western alchemical writings reflect a projection of human qualities to seemingly inanimate matter whereas Taoist writings describe a reversal of the Western perspective. Taoists look within themselves and find the landscape of their universe such as in the Lao-tzu creation myth. This difference may not be due to the archaic psychology of the early alchemists but instead may reflect the Western consciousness that has divided body and mind or, inner and outer. Despite this difference, the unity

between the macrocosm and microcosm is a demonstration of analogical thought in both Chinese and Western alchemy.

Although gold is a significant symbol in alchemy, it is inordinately valuable to this study for the exploration of gold ascertains the foundation of alchemical thought, the wholeness of the universe. The unity of the macrocosm and the microcosm, in turn, guides this analysis to a closer look at the union of physical time and eternal time. Through their similarity in being both metals and living organisms, gold and human beings are transformable by mastering time. Time, as the following discussion points out, is an essential component in the final stage of the alchemical process and is inherent in the two opposites that are united in the alchemical process.

The Mastery of Time

According to Eliade's above discussion of the unity of the macrocosm and the microcosm, the production of gold can be accelerated. Robinet's (1992/1997) following findings expand Eliade's conclusions about the production of gold and the ability of humans to master time. First is her comparison of natural gold and alchemical gold:

> Natural gold, the purest and most stable of metals, is the product of a slow metamorphosis, a long maturation that takes place within the earth. Alchemical gold is made by man but shares the same nature: it is simply the product of an induced transmutation. (p. 103)

Natural gold requires eons to develop whereas alchemical gold can be produced by mastering time.

Next, Robinet (1992/1997) explains the association of the unity of the macrocosm and microcosm and time:

> Man is a microcosm whose structure is the same as that of the macrocosm, and the same is true in alchemical operations, in both space and time. The time of maturation needed to produce natural gold can thus be contracted in line with the dimensions of the microcosm and so accelerated (or, more exactly, reduced). The idea of the reduction of time is significant, acceleration is only the manifestation and result of the miniaturization of the whole, which brings with it an intensification. (p. 103)

Robinet's statement that humans can master the passage of time is based on the belief that time in the microcosm is experienced differently from time in the macrocosm. Moreover, gold's ability to be transformed in the depths of the earth is paralleled in human beings (a miniaturization of the cosmos): people also can transform their base material to an incorruptible state. The preceding exploration of the symbolism of gold further develops the underlying theme of the final stage of the alchemical process, the unity of macrocosm and the microcosm, and highlights the importance of a second theme, time. The following discussion focuses on time as an element in the alchemical process.

Time

Time was noted earlier in Chang's (1987) fourth verse about the length of the alchemical process and in Schipper's discussion about ch'i and cyclical time. The reoccurrence of time in this study mandates a closer look at this topic. Thus far, two aspects of time that appear overtly in Chang's fourth and third verses are related to life on earth, or physical time, and immortality, or eternal time. The writings of several other authors tell us about the different kinds of time.

Physical Time

For Knoll (1957) and Jou (1981), physical time is measured by a scale. Physical time includes biological time that is experienced through developmental stages. The experience of biological time differs for each individual. We can observe this difference in young people who are "mature beyond their years" and in examples such as an 80-year-old woman who is still regularly enjoying mountain climbing. Another kind of time is psychological time that is experienced through our consciousness and our reactions to our environment. Time "flies" when you're having fun but seems like an eternity when you are in discomfort. These experiences of physical time are experiences of segments of time.

For Plessner (1951/1957), physical time has undergone fragmentation so that it is linked to our individual experience. Moreover, he states "there is a physical, a biological, a psychological, and a historical time; there is an experienced time, an imagined time, an economic, a religious, an artistic and a

political time" (p. 238). For Neumann (1951/1957), the western view of physical time is linked with Christianity where time began with the Creation and progresses towards its single goal of ascension to Heaven. One view of time is that it is rectilinear and irreversible. Physical time is the time of the world of three dimensions.

Primordial Time

According to van der Leeuw (1949/1957), there is another kind of time that is the model for physical time. As with physical time, there are several names for this second form of time. The ancient Greeks experienced this form of time as circular time. Corbin (1951/1957), through a study of Mazdaism, writes of a circular time that he refers to as primordial time. Neumann (1951/1957) also considers circular time as primordial time. For Corbin and Eliade (1951/1957), circular time is also eternal time. For Plessner (1951/1957), eternal time is mythical time: mythical time is the time of "once upon a time" that is a "paradoxical unity of Always and Now" (p. 263). Van der Leeuw explains this perspective in his statement: "there are no new times, no moment that has not been attained" (p. 336) in primordial time.

Taoist Time

These descriptions of the two kinds of time are congruent with the Taoist view of time. Earlier, Chuang-tzu and Schipper noted that the time of the Tao is cyclical time, a time with neither beginning nor ending. Kohn (1992) contributes

additional information on the Taoist view of time. Taoists differentiate time according to the world of form and the world of Void:

> The Tao is immediately responsible for the existence of life on earth, which develops originally from complete vacuity to natural so-being. The Tao is thus the constructive, life-giving aspect of nature. The bridge between the Tao and all-that-is is then provided by the One and the two, the Great Ultimate and yin and yang. It becomes apparent in the world as change and transformation, and structured through the five agents. Beyond that, the Tao is most apparent in qi [ch'i], the cosmic energy of the world. (p. 167)

The Tao is the source of both forms of time. The time of the Void is eternal and contrasts with physical time, the time of the world of form, a three dimensional world. In the Taoist perspective, time in the world of form, the human world, is experienced through ch'i and its transformations, the Five Phases. The following discussion of the Five Phases, a doctrine that Chang (1987) refers to as the Five Elements in his third verse, contributes additional details to this exploration of time that, in turn, amplifies another of Chang's metaphors, the intertwined tiger and dragon.

The Five Phases

The doctrine of the Five Phases, introduced previously as the Five Agents and the prior discussion of alchemical ingredients, exemplifies the unity of the microcosm and macrocosm and the cyclical nature of the universe. The Five

Phases divide all of the ceaseless and spontaneous cycles, the processes, and activities of the transformative energy, ch'i, into five phases. At first glance, the Five Phases appear to increase the now familiar three manifestations of the vital energy to five. However, on closer inspection, the Five Phases, also known as the "three fives," are indeed three phases. Liu (Chang, 1987), in interpreting the completion of the Five Elements mentioned in Chang's (1987) third verse, explains how the "three fives" are three phases. The first part of the "three fives" consists of a pair of opposites, fire and wood; the second part is also another pair of opposites, water and metal; the third part of the "three fives" is Earth, an element that holds the center position. The "three fives" and the Five Phases can also refer to the fundamental elements of the universe consisting of essence, sense, and the Three Treasures: vitality, energy, and spirit. In short, the Five Phases consist of not only the pairs opposites but also the three manifestations of the vital energy.

According to Liu (Chang, 1987), "When the Five Elements are complete, the tiger and dragon intertwine" (p. 130) refers to the recombining of the Five Phases into a whole. Liu's interpretation is supported by the imagery of the intertwining of tiger and dragon, a joining of two into the one. The completion of the Five Phases and the dragon and tiger to the wholeness of one are metaphors that represent the cycles of the vital energy of the Taoist cosmogony, the reversals of the universe. The same process is represented in Chang's (1987) statement about the husband and wife that are included in his third verse. This

pair of opposites is important to this verse for Chang is saying that even human beings can reverse time and return to the primordial wholeness.

For Cleary (Chang, 1987), assembling the Five Elements is "one of the most common constructs for referring to the unification or reconstituting the human being" (p. 8). Liu (Chang, 1987) refers to the reversal process in his statement that Chang's third verse teaches "people to assemble the five elements and return them to one house, restoring innate knowledge and innate capacity, the whole natural self" (p. 52). The completion of the Five Elements, the intertwined dragon and tiger, and the conjoined husband and wife symbolize the second of the two phases of the reversal, the reintegration that follows a separation. The motif of separations followed by reintegrations is a recurring theme that first emerged in the introduction to this study.

"When the Five Elements are completed" (Chang, 1987, p. 28), a reintegration, also refers to the transformation of earthly time or physical time to celestial or eternal time. The above exploration of time and amplification of the Five Elements, that is, Five Phases, tiger and dragon, and husband and wife reveals Chang's (1987) reasons for including three different pairs of opposites in his third verse: essence and sense, tiger and dragon, and the husband and wife. The three pairs of opposites are symbols of the three cosmological levels, heaven, earth, and humanity, and two kinds of time. Essence and sense represent the celestial level; the dragon and tiger the earthly level; and the husband and wife,

the human level. As the following discussion points out, the three cosmological levels are associated with the two kinds of time.

Time in the Taoist Cosmogony

The two kinds of time are time before and time after the creation of the universe. As Saso (1990) notes, yin and yang represent prior-to-heaven elements that are "directly gestated from the Tao" (p. 11). This pure form of cosmic energy then transmutes to forms symbolized by the tiger and dragon and husband and wife. The celestial pair (essence and sense) represents a prior-to-heaven time whereas the tiger and dragon and husband and wife represent a posterior-to-heaven time.

Although the husband and wife are obviously symbols of yin and yang, the tiger and dragon require a closer look. In Chinese alchemy, the tiger represents metal, lead, and is yin. Conversely, the dragon represents mercury and is yang. This exploration of the three pairs, the tiger and dragon, essence and sense, and husband and wife supports the view that the alchemical process transforms physical time (posterior-to-heaven) that is yin to primordial time (prior-to-heaven) that is yang. Not only is this transformation a demonstration of the movements of the Taoist cosmos, but it is also an action that Chang (1987) expresses through another metaphor, the "two things" (p. 28). The following discussion brings together the findings of the amplifications of gold, the Five Phases, and the three pairs of opposites with the writings of Robinet and Burckhardt in order to amplify Chang's metaphor, the two things.

The Two Things

The metaphor, the two things, carries on the theme of the two kinds of time, a prior-to-heaven and a posterior-to-heaven time, as well as elaborates on the theme of ch'i. The notion of two kinds of time is based on the creation of the universe as described in the Tao-te ching. In the prior-to-heaven time, according to Saso (1990), the One is "always taken to mean yuan-ch'i 'primordial breath'" (p. 8). By the separation of ch'i from the primordial state of One, the Two of the Taoist cosmos is created. The cosmic states of One and Two are prior-to-heaven and are associated with eternal time. Also noted previously, the Two, that is ch'i, consists of a polarity of yin and yang. The polarity that results from the separation of the One may well explain the Two of the Taoist cosmogony and Chang's (1987) metaphor, the "two things." However, Robinet's following discussion of the noumenal and the phenomenal worlds further differentiates the metaphor, two things, and identifies even more intricate details of the binary nature of the Taoist cosmogony.

The Noumenal World

Although Robinet (1992/1997) confirms that alchemical masters interpret the two things as yin and yang, she also asserts that the two things represent the noumenal and phenomenal realms. She describes the noumenal world as follows:

> The xiantian (literally, "before heaven") is the world of noumena, "before heaven and earth," the eternal world of the innate (the "original nature,"

> xing) of which man holds within him, even before his birth, a tiny piece called the "spark of the original Yang," a light that appears above the furnace, like the light of the moon when the clouds suddenly part, in a "blinding moment without time." (pp. 250-251)

Robinet's definition of the noumenal realm corresponds to the innate alchemical ingredient identified previously in Chang's (1987) verses, also present before the creation of the universe. The noumenal realm corresponds to the active side of soul, essence, and is yang.

The characteristics of the noumenal world can also be detected in Burckhardt's (1960/1967) discussion of the Divine Intellect. Burckhardt posits that there is a Divine Intellect that contains the "essential predeterminations of things" (p. 65) and is a form-giving cause that "signifies the intelligible reality of a thing, and is quite independent of the thing's material existence" (p. 61). Burckhardt's definition supports parallels between yang, the noumenal realm, cosmic wisdom, and Divine Intellect. In describing the form-giving cause as Divine or Universal Intellect, Burckhardt also provides us with details of its opposite pole, materia. For Burckhardt, materia, described earlier as pure matter, accords the form giving cause of the noumenal realm finite existence and is thus the basis for the corporeal world and physical time. As the basis of the corporeal world, materia is "the root of 'otherness' for it is through it that things are limited and multiple" (p. 63). Additional similarities can be found in

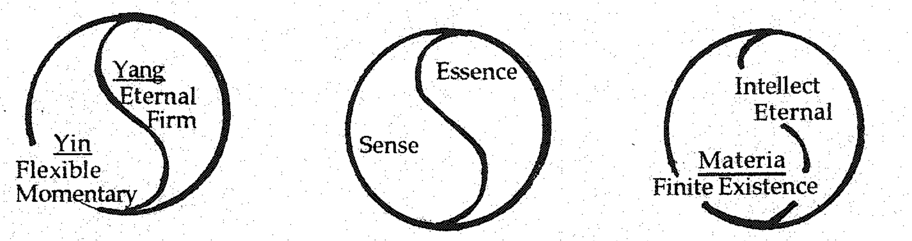
Burckhardt's discussion of materia and Robinet's following description of the phenomenal world.

The Phenomenal World

According to Robinet (1992/1997), the phenomenal world is a world of yin: "Houtian is the world of phenomena, the 'later world' of passions (qing) [ching]--which waver and change--of movement, of change, represented also by the term ming" (p. 250). Ming represents "the resistant, corporeal, weighty part of human beings. It is this part of our makeup that requires constant work, a vocation that requires the 'incarnation' or concretization of the primordial celestial intuition" (p. 250), the hsing. The contrast between ming and hsing parallels Robinet's differentiation of the phenomenal world and the noumenal world. The world of phenomena is a "world of action" (p. 251), a world of posterior heaven where time is constantly changing. Time in the noumenal world is eternal whereas time in the phenomenal world corresponds to our experience of physical, biological, or psychological time.

Robinet's (1992/1997) differentiation of the two kinds of time further develops the differentiation between essence and sense that began in a prior discussion of the two poles of the soul. Robinet's noumenal realm is present in humans as an innate element that is eternal and firm or yang. In Complete Reality Taoism, essence or real knowledge is yang and is firm whereas sense is conscious knowledge that is yin. In short, Robinet's noumenal realm corresponds to the Complete Reality Taoism essence and Burckhardt's Divine

Intellect. Robinet's phenomenal realm parallels sense in Complete Reality Taoism and Burckhardt's materia, a world that is flexible and is momentary. The diagram shown in Figure 6 summarizes the correspondences:



Two Things — Robinet

Sense and Essence — Chang

Intellect and Materia — Burckhardt

Figure 6. The Two Poles of Ch'i and Soul

Burckhardt's (1960/1967) discussion of the Divine Intellect, a form-giving cause amplifies the similarities in Chang's (1987) metaphor, two things, and the two kinds of time. Burckhardt explains that "the essence of a form, irrespective of its material 'clothing', always remains the same" (p. 62). In contrast, the phenomenal world or materia is a world of constant changes. This world of senses is a world of the ten thousand things that emerged after the creation of heaven and earth; a world where time is rectilinear and is experienced through the three dimensions of space. There is, as the following exploration of time as the fourth dimension indicates, another way to view the union of opposites: time,

linked with mental and spiritual qualities, unites with space, our experience of matter.

The Fourth Dimension

This exploration of the metaphors of gold elixir, two things, and the Five Phases emphasize the importance of time in Chang's (1987) third verse. The two things, associated with yin and yang, represent the two kinds of time: a cycle consisting of prior-to-heaven time and posterior-to-heaven time. Just as many transitions in the cycle of birth and death are not perceptible to humans, so is the transition from one form of time to the second not perceptible to humans. Humans, according to Jou (1981), are not able "to see the wholeness of time in 'one moment'" (p. 44).

Our perspective that birth is one point in linear time and death is another point is reflected in our view of time. We see time beginning at some point in the past and expect it to continue into future but we can only experience the present. We are, in short, a pawn of time. According to Jou (1981):

> Man has no control over it and no ordinary means of comprehending it as a dimension. Man is born and dies in time and in between he only perceives the now-present, now-present, now-present. When he is twenty he can't see the man of sixty. When he is sixty the young man of twenty is gone. He admonishes 'know thyself' and forgets himself from minute to minute, unable to see the ends of his words or the beginning of the chain in which he is linked. (p. 44)

Ordinarily, humans are not able to experience time as a fourth dimension.

With our sensory capabilities (or limitations), we experience time, biological, physical, and psychological, as fragments. According to Jou (1981), humans cannot experience the simultaneity of time for "time is not something that exists objectively by itself. Space and time form a complex continuum which is undifferentiated" (p. 21). Jou argues that this complex is a part of the universe and is a fourth dimension.

In the fourth dimension, time is eternal. According to Jou (1984), "if we could be aware of all four dimensions then we would be in a godlike state, for the fourth dimension contains all past, present and future" (p. 58). If it were possible to view the two kinds of time geometrically, such as in Figure 7, physical time would be a line with a beginning point and an ending point, whereas eternal time would be the circumference of a sphere with no beginning and no end. Life, measured by birth and death would be but a short segment of this line.

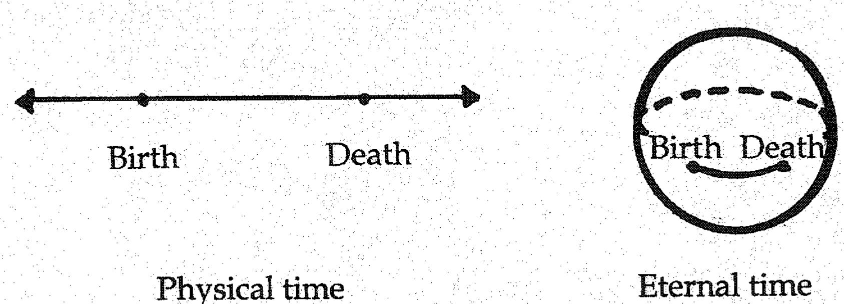


Figure 7. Two Kinds of Time

Physical time is irreversible whereas eternal time is cyclical. In the following discussion, the position that the union of the two opposites in the alchemical process is the union of the two kinds of time is presented. This view brings a new perspective to our understanding of the alchemical experience and the process of reversal.

Conjunction of Time

Robinet (1992/1997) provides additional information that explains how physical time can merge with eternal time. She states that the union of the two realms of the noumenal and the phenomenal is a "conjunction of the instantaneous and the gradual, of eternity and the moment" (p. 250). This conjunction is "a joining of activity and stillness into the 'non-action that is action.' Without ming [the receptive part], the xing [the potential] bogs down in an inactive, futile void; without xing, the ming cannot arrive at 'non-action'" (p. 250). It can be said that the conjunction of both kinds of time is the conjunction of the two opposites, yin and yang. Eternal time is intrinsic in essence or yang whereas physical time is a part of the senses or yin.

In the words of Robinet (1992/1997), the goal of the alchemical is a joining of "instantaneity and gradualism, spontaneous intuition and ongoing effort, into a synthesis that is 'an acquiring of the innate' with a view to fixing an innate presence that is otherwise fugitive and immaterial" (p. 250). The reversal to the One is a conjunction of eternal time with a point in physical time--a union of momentary human perception and eternal cosmic intuition. Schipper's

(1982/1993) description of the union of the two supports Robinet's findings. He states that the union of being and non-being "implies a return, an involution and this return is part of the dynamics of mastered time" (p. 156). By mastering time, the "cycle of creation moves in reverse" (p. 156).

For Schipper, time is reversed, whereas Eliade indicates that time is accelerated. Robinet considers time to be reduced or intensified. These differing perspectives of time support the Taoist position that the union of opposites requires the participation of human senses: it is a process of congealing eternal time through human senses. The different perspectives of the experience of eternal time are reflected in the many different names for and descriptions of the alchemical goal. As the following discussion demonstrates, there are also differing views on experiences of meditation just as there are a variety of experiences of the return to the Void.

An example of the diverse experiences of meditation can be found in Robinet's discussion of the conjunction of time and Jou's discussion of meditation. Robinet (1992/1997) states that the conjunction of time is the joining of stillness and activity that is non-action in action. Jou (1981) claims that the goal of meditation is to seek "action in inaction" (p. 67). Braden (1997) offers information that finds parity in these two seemingly contradictory statements.

Braden (1997) posits that Zero Point is the goal of ancient mediation practices. He provides the following explanation of the dynamics of Zero Point:

> Newton's law of thermodynamics states that at absolute zero, all molecules are perfectly aligned and motionless, with the degree of disorder (entropy) at zero. Traditional physics states that this is a theoretical point only, not possible to attain experimentally. Quantum physics, however, predicts and allows for continued motion through absolute zero. (p. 12)

Zero Point is a point where the vibrations of the energy in matter decline to zero. This point represents transitions or changes of state in matter that to an observer, appear to be still whereas the participant experiences the energy in the stillness. This difference in perspective can be applied to the difference in the statements of Robinet and Jou. Robinet's statement appears to be from the perspective of the participant whose goal is non-action through the quieting of senses and thoughts.

Jou (1981), on the other hand, describes the experience of the participant who is in the midst of meditation:

> It is possible with patience and persistence to feel, as if intuitively, very subtly, very delicately, the nature of time. By following this feeling we may move close enough to the border of the fourth dimensional world to get a glimpse of that reality. (p. 67)

Jou's statement focuses on the feeling of action in the stillness of meditation. His statement corresponds to Braden's finding that the meditator experiences activity at Zero Point.

The preceding exploration of the union of physical time and eternal time emphasizes one of the essential elements in the union of the opposites: human senses. In meditation, practitioners experience the moment of the union of the opposites according to whether their goal is to seek action in non-action or whether it is to seek action in inaction. The varying experiences of meditation continue in the following descriptions of the final stage of the alchemical process, refining shen. These descriptions, based upon the practitioner's account of darkness that is followed by an experience of light, carry on the theme of time and set the foundation for a closer look at the refining of shen or spirit, the focus of the final stage of the alchemical process.

The Return

Just as the alchemical goal has a variety of names, so are there varying descriptions of the final stage of the alchemical process. Taoists' references to the final stage include refining shen, a return to primordial time, and the return to the Void. In the following exploration of refining shen, the theme of the conjunction of physical time with primordial time is continued. In addition, the differences in experiences of the final stage of the alchemical process will be explored: descriptions of a yin phase and a yang phase suggest that these two phases may be responsible for the varying experiences of the reintegration to wholeness.

Refining Shen

Blofeld's (1978) discussion of the three forms of shen supports the difference between the two kinds of time and their effects on the alchemical experience. Through his encounters with Taoist texts that include "such terms as 'desire shen' or knowing shen" (p. 150), Blofeld claims that coarse shen is associated with mind: this form of shen is "regarded as central to the faculties of observation, discrimination and desiring. Since it came into being after the birth of the universe and is therefore transitory, it has to be nourished and transmuted into subtle shen" (p. 150). In other words, coarse shen is associated with the mind and the world of physical time. In contrast, subtle shen is a "spark of spiritual radiance implanted in each man's mind uniting it with that which lives beyond such transitory developments as the birth and destruction of a universe" (pp. 149-150). Subtle shen corresponds to eternal time and is associated with the realm of spirit. The third form of shen is "cosmic spirit, void, pure undifferentiated being" (p. 132) and corresponds to the Void of the Taoist cosmos. In summary, Blofeld's differentiation of shen indicates that coarse shen is associated with our minds and physical time; subtle shen is associated with unsullied spirit and eternal time; cosmic shen is the void and not accessible to ordinary human senses.

Blofeld (1978) tells us how to transmute coarse shen through Hsi Wang Mu's instructions:

> The way to fix [the shen] and hold [it] is to know what is happiness, [namely,] being satisfied with what is enough, being beyond the power of cold and hunger to dismay, being free from the bondage of idle thoughts--for then arises ch'i wherewith the mind is nourished. Practise in the middle watches of the night, not troubling about special postures. Just fold your hands together, relax your limbs, banish idle thoughts, let your own body be the sole object of awareness. Then will the shen be fixed, the ch'i righted and your spirit impervious to aging and death. (p. 150)

Through the refining process, the cycling of ch'i follows its natural course, and a conscious mind that is replete with thoughts and the "infections of the senses" (p. 151) is transformed into spirit and the realm of eternal time. In this realm, "yang-shen is composed solely of prior-to-heaven yang-ch'i" (p. 151), that is, primordial time.

This discussion of refining shen is a reminder of the central role of ch'i in the alchemical process and brings together several themes that have been identified in this analysis of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). These themes include the doctrine of reversal, the cycling of ch'i through its three phases, and the differences in the two kinds of time. The following differentiation between two phases that occur in the last stage of the alchemical process takes a closer look at the experience of the Void, an experience of darkness and light. Descriptions of the return to the Void are congruent with the last line in Chang's (1987) fourth verse: the alchemical process "brings out the orb of the sun in the

deep pool" (p. 32). The following discussion of the experience of the light that appears out of the darkness also amplifies Chang's metaphors in the last line of Verse 3 and adds descriptive details that enhance Jung's (1957/1967) conclusion that the alchemical experience is a "vision of light" (p. 27).

A Yin Experience

This exploration of the final stage finds that many alchemical scholars have described the experience of darkness before the appearance of light. Robinet (1992/1997), who continues the practice of naming the final stage of the alchemical process in several ways: "return to the void or to the Tao or to the 'original nature'" (p. 247), interprets the experience through the structure of time. Robinet refers to the final stage as yinization, a return "from later, worldly time to an earlier time, that of alchemy, the time of eternity before Heaven and Earth existed, the time of pure Yang and pure Yin" (p. 247). For Robinet, yinization describes the moment of rebirth known as "the principle of immobility and invisibility" (p. 247). Immobility and invisibility are not "nothingness (the 'useless void') but a state of complete darkness and stillness from which light and movement burst forth" (p. 247). Her description corresponds to Jou's statement, mentioned earlier, that this is an experience of action in inaction.

According to Robinet (1992/1997), the action is "described as blinding, when 'suddenly' (huran) something emerges that 'transports' (haoran, the word used by the Confucian philosopher Mengzi [Mencius]), most often described as an opening, a 'mysterious pass'" (p. 249). In the discussion that follows, several

authors attribute yang qualities to the Void but Robinet differentiates the experience of the Void into two phases. For Robinet, the complete darkness of the Void is represented by the I Ching hexagram K'un: "it is the 'exhaustion of the Tao [that is to say, the task] and the return to the Kun-Origin.' One reaches the moment when 'the six Yin [lines] are exhausted and Yang has not yet emerged'" (p. 244). At this moment the celestial light has not yet appeared: a moment of non-action in the action of meditation. Robinet's discussion of the final stage of the alchemical experience sheds light on the differences in descriptions of the experience. For some, the darkness that they experience is non-action in the act of meditation. For others, the light that appears is action in the inaction of the darkness.

A Yang Experience

Schipper (1982/1993) agrees that the experience of the Void begins in darkness followed by an experience of celestial light. He claims that this stage just before the fall into "the unknown regions of Chaos" (p. 144) is a "disruption of the system, caused by agents who are deities of yin, of shadow, of Non-Being" (p. 144). In contrast, Blofeld and Chang emphasize the yang aspects of the Void. For Blofeld (1978), the return to the Void results in "'pure yang' not emptiness, but undifferentiated, wholly intangible fullness, or formless yang-shen" (p. 152). Blofeld compares the appearance of the light of pure yang and the light of the full moon that suddenly appears from behind the clouds: it is a light that "shines

within the stillness of the void" (p. 149). Blofeld describes an action in inaction that corresponds to Jou's experience of meditation that was noted above.

For Chang (1987), the experience is like the transformation of a chicken "into a phoenix, flying into the pure realm of true yang" (p. 140). In addition, Liu (Chang, 1987) interprets Chang's reference to the North Court Palace as the "celestial court" (p. 32), an experience of yang. These descriptions of the return to the Void indicate that the experience begins with inaction or yin that spontaneously transforms to action or yang. The differences in the various descriptions of the experience of the return may be due to the involvement of human senses but all include the experience of darkness (yin) followed by light (yang) and all agree that this is a spiritual experience.

This exploration of refining shen continues the theme of the conjunction of time and a focus on the spiritual aspects of the alchemical process. The exploration of the final stage of the alchemical process began with an analysis of the symbolism of gold that identified the foundation of alchemical thought, the unity of the macrocosm and the microcosm. This unity is itself the foundation of the notion that there are two kinds of time: a prior-to-heaven time, a world of eternal time and potentiality, and a posterior-to-heaven time, the realm of our senses. Refining shen conjoins the two kinds of time, a merging of the instantaneous with eternity. In addition, diverse experiences of the Return to the Void account for the varying descriptions of the final stage of the alchemical process. The following discussion continues the focus on the final stage, the

refining of shen, spirit. An exploration of the spiritual aspects of the final stage amplifies Jung's (1957/1967) comments on the goal of the Chinese meditative process, a detached consciousness.

The Spiritual Foundation

The final stage of joining the two opposites, frequently expressed as a cosmic pregnancy that culminates in the birth of a spiritual embryo, exemplifies the spiritual nature of the experience. Although there are many Taoist descriptions of this experience, the following discussion focuses on its spiritual foundations. Chang (1987) does not explicitly name the spiritual embryo in his third verse but alludes to the embryo by stating that "the achievement" (p. 28) is completed after the conjoining of husband and wife. This is the "achievement" that results in a flight on a phoenix to the North Palace Gate as spirit. The flight is likened to a glimpse into another dimension where time is eternal and simultaneous.

Time continues to be a significant factor in this exploration of the final stage of the alchemical process. In sharp contrast, the elements of time are not pursued in Jung's (1957/1967) first alchemical study. However, his later study of the coniunctio includes references to time. Jung's discussion of time will be included in the following look at the spiritual foundation. His findings provide a psychological perspective to the exploration of the final stage of the alchemical process when physical time merges with eternal time.

The Embryo

The following exploration of the spiritual embryo further develops the theme of the mastery of time. In Blofeld's (1978) discussion of refining shen, he uses the metaphor of the spiritual embryo to describe the transformation of physical time to the world of spirit:

> Coarse shen has been transmuted into subtle shen, and this in turn transmuted into the void. A 'spirit-child' has been created, a void entity which, with the dissolution of the body, will be able to unite with the Void. Thus will the adept's spirit return to its Source, the Tao. (p. 152)

In the final stage of the alchemical process, the adept is transported to the realm of "original being" (p. 152) through the creation of a spirit-child.

Chang's (1987) 14th verse, Part 1 addresses the spiritual nature of this state and the return to the primordial realm, the One:

> THREE, FIVE, ONE: IT IS ALL THREE WORDS; THOSE WHO UNDERSTAND ARE RARE IN ALL TIMES. THREE IN THE EAST, TWO IN THE SOUTH, TOGETHER MAKES FIVE; ONE IN THE NORTH AND FOUR IN THE WEST ARE THE SAME. EARTH IN ITS OWN ABODE HAS THE PRODUCTION NUMBER FIVE. WHEN THE THREE MEET, THEY FORM AN INFANT. THE INFANT IS ONE, CONTAINING TRUE ENERGY; IN TEN MONTHS THE FETUS IS COMPLETE, AND ENTERS THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION. (p. 52)

In this verse, Chang uses numbers that have been discussed earlier, the One of the primordial state, the three levels of the cosmos, and the three fives that are combined to create the wholeness of the Five Elements (Five Phases). Here, the merging of the three fives (wood and fire, metal and water, and earth) creates an embryo. Chang's message, that the creation of the embryo, the One, is a return to the world of spirit, is congruent with Blofeld's above statement that the return to the One is a return to a time prior to the world of form.

The use of images of pregnancy and birth is a common practice in Taoism. According to Liu (Chang, 1987), Taoists refer to the alchemical goal as "the infant, or the primordial one energy, or the spiritual embryo, or the restored elixir" (p. 53). Robinet (1992/1997) traces the motif of the embryo to many Taoist texts including the Huai-nan tzu where it was "already taken up in chapter 7" (p. 203). Robinet also explains the association of gestation and the spiritual nature of the alchemical process. She states that "interior alchemy is an operative discipline, a creative act, a process to be carried out, that is both redeeming and regenerative. Its inevitable result is the birth of the fetus, the new man" (p. 218).

Pregnancy and birth of the spiritual embryo are metaphors that are derived from the ancient Taoist cosmology in which the universe is constantly recreating itself, gestations of the Primordial Breath. In this act, the Primordial Breath, as mentioned in the literature review and the previous discussion of the unity of the microcosm and macrocosm, imbues every item with a life cycle. Eliade (1956/1962) offers associations that amplify the spiritual embryo. He

finds that ores and metals are like "organisms that 'grow' inside the earth, like an embryo that grows inside the womb" (p. 21). Referring to Ko Ch'ang Keng's (a 13th-century alchemist) description of the length of the alchemical process, he notes that "by this method a gestation which normally requires ten months can be achieved in the twinkling of an eye" (p. 121). Eliade's findings are supported by Schipper (1982/1993) who also claims that "pregnancy is the paradigm for the creation of the universe" (p. 117).

Schipper's (1982/1993) following discussion associates the creation of the spiritual embryo with the union of physical and eternal times, a union of yin and yang:

> When Lao Tzu died, his body was transformed into a landscape, the same landscape we find within ourselves as the domain of the infant, source of life as well as fruit of the union of the elements that make up this inner landscape. The child is again Lao Tzu himself, the immortal child in his mother's breast. According to an ancient hagiography, before he was born, Lao Tzu went through nine phases of the embryo's transformation, following a nine-phase cycle. The number nine corresponds to the accomplishment of cosmic creation. (p. 116)

Here, the mother is the yin energy whereas the energy that develops the embryo in nine phases is the yang energy. As does the experience of the return to the Void, the birth of the spiritual embryo begins with yin and is achieved through yang.

Schipper's description of the inner landscape emphasizes yang and its role in the final stage of the alchemical process. This emphasis is also found in Chang's metaphors of riding a flying phoenix, the "light of the nine-fold mist," and the "North Palace Gate." As Blofeld (1978) notes, yang-shen "transcends the triple world. [With it] your task will be complete, your practice done; and you will ascend the shining canopy of heaven" (p. 151). In the final stage of alchemical process, the vital energy reverses from yin to yang. Descriptions of the final stage of the Chinese alchemical process are notably absent in Jung's (1957/1967) first alchemical study. However, the following look at the third stage of the Western alchemical coniunctio includes Jung's psychological interpretations of the final stage for his discussions support the conclusion that alchemical process leads to a spiritual experience, an experience of eternal time.

The Unus Mundus

In his commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower, Jung (1957/1967) describes the experience of the alchemical goal by citing Edward Maitland's "central experience" (p. 26) and the "central vision" (p. 27) of Hildegard of Bingen. He reaches the following conclusion:

> So far as I have been able to understand it, it seems to have to do with an acute state of consciousness, as intense as it is abstract, a "detached" consciousness, which as Hildegard implies, brings into awareness areas of psychic happenings ordinarily covered in darkness. The fact that the general bodily sensations disappear during the experience suggests that

> their specific energy has been withdrawn and has apparently gone towards heightening the clarity of consciousness. As a rule, the phenomenon is spontaneous, coming and going on its own initiative. (p. 28)

At this stage of his alchemical studies, Jung relies on written rather than personal experiences to describe the alchemical process. No mention is made of the element of time although he does allude to a reversal of energy.

However, in a later study, Jung (1955-56/1970) addresses the importance of time in the third stage of the coniunctio. He describes the experience in the following way:

> First the turning away from the world of sense, then the turning towards the inner world of the mind and the hidden celestial substance, the image and truth of God, and finally the contemplation of the transcendental unus mundus, the potential world outside of time. (p. 505)

Jung's description corresponds to an experience of the return to the Void.

Jung (1955-56/1970) concludes that the experience of the unus mundus is the experience of a "potential world of the first day of creation, when nothing was yet 'in actu,' i.e., divided into two and many but was still one" (p. 534). For Jung, the unus mundus is a "synthesis of the conscious with the unconscious" (p. 53), a reconciliation of the opposites. Furthermore, Jung sees the attainment of the spirit level as "a window into eternity" (p. 473) that "conveys to the soul a certain 'divine influx' and the knowledge of higher things, wherein consists

precisely its supposed animation of the soul" (p. 473). Jung's description parallels Jou's conclusions about the divine nature of the fourth dimension.

Jung (1955-56/1970) does not state that he experienced the third stage and notes that "even Dorn did not venture to assert that he or any other adept had perfected the third stage in his lifetime" (p. 467). He does, however, find a commonalty with Dorn's third stage of the coniunctio and the union of the "individual tao with the universal tao" (p. 535). Jung's statement recognizes that the return to the Tao is similar to the experience of the unus mundus, the third stage of the coniunctio. Jung's discussion also points out that this is an experience of primordial time.

Braden's (1997) discussion of Zero Point contributes another perspective that supplements Jung's psychological interpretation of the experience of the unus mundus. Braden finds that Zero Point, a shift in the vibrations of the energy that binds "together the systems of man, Earth and all of creation" (p. 48), is a shift in dimensionality. He bases his argument on his study of "the relationship between Earth, the planetary magnetic fields, and cellular functions of the body" (p. 13). His findings about shifts in the intensity of Earth's magnetic fields lend credence to the Taoist notion that there are differences in the speed of the cycling of the vital energy.

The differences in speed of the vital energy are manifested in the energies of Three Treasures. The speeds of the energies and their transitions can also be translated into the language of Braden's Zero Point and the two kinds of time.

The transition from physical time to eternal time occurs when mind and body are still and the vibrations of energy are nourished, that is, refined to a state of etherealness. In this state, the effects of the "currents" of biological and psychological time are diminished. Zero Point, where all the forms of all dimensions can be experienced simultaneously, parallels the Taoist state of the return to the Void when ch'i is righted and shen is fixed. This is, in Jung's words, an experience of the potential world outside of time.

The above descriptions of the final stage emphasize the spiritual nature of the process when thoughts, our minds, are transformed into spirit. The experience of a spiritual consciousness is carried on in the following discussion and is followed with an amplification of two metaphors in Chang's (1987) third verse, the go-betweens, heaven-earth and earth-earth. According to Chang, the union of opposites requires the two go-betweens. The amplification of the go-betweens uncovers additional details about the merging of the two opposites.

A Spiritual Consciousness

The following exploration of the return to the Void focuses on another form of consciousness that is beyond ego consciousness and paradoxical or flexible consciousness. This consciousness corresponds to the spiritual experiences of the mystics that Jung (1957/1967) cites in his discussion of "detached" consciousness. Blofeld (1978) describes this consciousness as "floating

off at times to merge with the primordial condition beyond the universe of form" (p. 153). For Blofeld, floating or "'flying' is a state of consciousness in which all sense of self and other, of heaven and earth, has vanished" (p. 153). Blofeld refers us to T'ien Hsuan-tzu who believes that "when the shen of knowing ceases, great wisdom then takes birth" (p. 151). This wisdom, according to Blofeld, is "pure undifferentiated awareness" (p. 151):

> By 'voided shen' is meant mind or spirit so free from the bondage to the senses and to such dualisms as 'I' and 'other' that individual existence has been transcended, except to the extent that the yogin still possesses individual bodily form. (p. 152)

The experience of primordial time, a spiritual consciousness, is an experience of perfect harmony between body and mind. Chang (1987) refers to this state of harmony in his third verse in his metaphors, heaven-earth and earth-earth. Chang's inclusion of these "go-betweens" is a reminder that the vital energy has an intermediary nature. The following analysis of these two metaphors finds a hierarchical relationship between the two opposites that clarifies the state of spiritual consciousness and further defines the complementary relationship between yin and yang.

The Go-betweens

Chang (1987) addresses a state of perfect harmony between body and mind in his metaphors, earth-earth and heaven-earth, a harmony that is necessary in the union of opposites. The go-betweens are also two I Ching

hexagrams, T'ai (heaven-earth) and K'un (earth-earth). T'ai or Peace is composed of the trigram Earth (three broken lines) above the trigram Heaven (three whole lines). K'un, the Receptive consists of two trigrams of earth (six broken lines). This amplification of the go-betweens first focuses on earth-earth before exploring heaven-earth.

As we know, the broken lines of earth-earth represent the feminine, the dark, yielding, receptive primal power of yin. The broken lines also represent, according to the I Ching (1950/1967),

> nature in contrast to spirit, earth in contrast to heaven, space as against time, the female-maternal as against the male-paternal. However, as applied to human affairs, the principle of this complementary relationship is found not only in the relation between man and woman, but also in that between prince and minister and between father and son. Indeed, even in the individual this duality appears in the coexistence of the spiritual world and the world of the senses. (p. 10)

The I Ching defines earth-earth or spatial reality by contrasting it with its opposite, spiritual potentiality. This contrast is carried on in the I Ching commentary on heaven-earth.

According to the I Ching (1950/1967), the go-between heaven-earth is a union of time, Heaven, and space, Earth. The arrangement of the trigram of heaven-earth is particularly significant because Earth, the Receptive, ordinarily moves downward but is standing above Heaven, the Creative. Similarly,

Heaven that ordinarily ascends, is below. The reversal of the normal movements of Heaven and Earth results in a relationship that is complementary: "hence their influences meet and are in harmony, so that all living things bloom and prosper" (p. 48). In this situation, harmony is not the subsuming of the other but an acceptance of the differences of the other.

The I Ching (1950/1967) commentary amplifies our understanding of the complementary relationship of the two opposites in a united duality. United dualities have been portrayed as sweet dew, yellow sprouts, the dragon, the phoenix, and the T'ai-ch'i. The I Ching commentary is notable for it selects a common animal, a mare, as a symbol of united opposites. The mare is a symbol of a state in which the spiritual (the potential) is realized through the receptivity of space: the mare "combines the strength and swiftness of the horse, with gentleness and devotion of the cow" (p. 11). In short, masculine strength combined with the feminine in one entity just as the universal mind is contained in the universal soul.

The mare exemplifies a union of two opposites that are in harmony. This harmonious relationship, however, is not one of equality. According to the I Ching (1950/1967):

> There is no real dualism here, because there is a clearly defined hierarchic relationship between the two principles. In itself of course the Receptive is just as important as the Creative, but the attribute of devotion defines the place occupied by this primal power in relation to the Creative. For

> the Receptive must be activated and led by the Creative; then it is productive of good. Only when it abandons this position and tries to stand as an equal side by side with the Creative, does it become evil. (p. 11)

Although there is devotion and harmony between the two opposites, the I Ching also clearly states that there is a hierarchical relationship between the two opposites. This differentiation, applied to the union of conscious knowledge and real knowledge, indicates that the consciousness of humans (obtained through senses) must defer to celestial consciousness. Psychologically, this means that ego must get off center stage and take a subordinate role. The following discussion takes a closer look at the hierarchical relationship of the two opposites.

A Marriage of Yin and Yang

Burckhardt (1960/1967) offers another perspective to the hierarchical relationship between masculine and feminine. He describes this difference in rank between the powers of the soul as the difference between the right and left hands, "so that the masculine pole can be said to be placed above the feminine" (p. 150). His reasoning is as follows:

> The fundamental masculine and feminine powers are anchored on the plane of the soul, but realize their fulfillment only in spirit, for only here does feminine receptivity attains its broadest breadth and its purest purity, and is wholly united to the victorious masculine Act. The other

> way round it can be said that involuntary nature, rooted in the unconscious, only attains her living unity to the extent that the Supra-conceptual Spirit acts on her. (p. 154)

Using the terms of yin and yang, Burckhardt's statement may be interpreted in the following way: yin because of its passive and involuntary nature requires the power of yang to attain its full potential. Conversely, the power of yang can only be realized when it becomes spatial through the receptivity of yin. The attainment of full potential occurs because of the devotion and harmony that exists between the opposites.

This dynamic is also experienced in the alchemical process. As the above descriptions of the final stage of the alchemical process indicate, yin has to be experienced before yang in the final stage of the alchemical process. This exploration of the third stage of the alchemical process finds that the spiritual consciousness of the last stage is not a state of balance between the two opposites but a hierarchical relationship that is also a complementary relationship. Because the movements of the Tao are reversals, yin requires the powers of yang just as much as yang needs yin to fulfill its potential. The complementary relationship of the opposites stands as a model for all relationships, both internally and externally.

Summary

The preceding analysis of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process parallels the three stages of the alchemical process. The first stage began with attention to the body not only as the alchemical ingredient but also the body's effect on the vital energy. The importance of the body is reflected in Chang's (1987) use of the I Ching trigrams, Fire and Water, and in the task of nourishing ching. In the second stage, the focus moved from the body to psychological states known as united dualities. The united dualities are represented by several metaphors in Chang's sixth verse such as sweet dew and yellow sprouts as well as ch'i and in two Western alchemical motifs, Mercurius and the anima mundi. In the third and final stage, the refining focuses on the spiritual aspects of the alchemical process, a theme that became apparent in the amplification of gold.

Not only is gold a symbol of the transmutation of ch'i to spirit; it is also the foundation of alchemical thought, the unity of the microcosm and the macrocosm. The personification of the macrocosm is itself the basis for the belief in the mastery of time, one of the basic principles in alchemy: the alchemical goal is achieved when physical time unites with eternal time. Blofeld (1978) describes the experience as "entering the joyous state of spontaneity and freedom wherein the spirit goes forth to 'fly above the stars'" (p. 161). He quotes Taoist Master Tseng:

> Take no heed of what you see; then will you rest spontaneously in the perfect stillness of undifferentiated being, with holy radiance shining

> everywhere and passing effortlessly into your being from the pure undifferentiated Source. (p. 151)

Master Tseng's experience of the return to the primordial unity is the ultimate goal of the alchemical process. Celestial immortality is achieved because "the mind of one who returns to the Source thereby BECOMES the Source. Your own mind is DESTINED TO BECOME THE UNIVERSE ITSELF!" (p. 164). The refining process reaches its highest level with an experience of primordial time. Mind is transformed to spirit.

The transformation of mind to spirit produces a spiritual consciousness. Just as the integration of the outer symbols found in Chang's (1987) verses with inner reflections and processing bring new perspectives to the meanings in his verses, so does this consciousness appear in the darkness of the void as a light of spiritual consciousness. This is a consciousness that is best described in poetic terms for it transcends the world of form-giving cause and matter. Taoist experiences of the final stage contribute additional details about the spiritual nature of the alchemical goal, a state that Jung describes as a detached consciousness. The merging of eternal time with physical time takes the practitioner beyond the phenomenon of fantasy images to an ecstatic experience, darkness followed by spontaneous light. "In the light of nine-fold mist you ride a flying phoenix" (p. 28).

CHAPTER 5

CIRCLES, SPHERES, AND SPIRALS

The goal of this study is to enrich Jung's (1957/1967) first alchemical study through an analysis of the Complete Realty Taoism alchemical process as propounded in Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987). In his study of the Chinese meditative process, Jung makes the following allusions to its Taoist foundations: (1) the realization of the Tao is a process of uniting the opposites, consciousness and life; (2) the golden flower is the light of the Tao; and (3) reversal is the action of the Tao. In addition, Jung claims that the circle and the golden flower are symbols associated with the creation of fantasy images. Despite these conclusions, Jung includes neither a comprehensive discussion of the components of the Taoist cosmogony in his commentary nor details on the creation of images.

A depth-psychological analysis of Chang's (1987) instructions for the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process establishes the importance of the Taoist cosmogony for the alchemical goal is a return to the Tao. In this chapter, themes that emerged from the analysis of Chang's verses that are associated with the Taoist world-view are revisited in order to augment Jung's interpretations of the Taoist meditative process. One of the most important recurring motifs is the vital energy ch'i that is also the principle of separation. The following review of the Taoist cosmogony delves into details of ch'i and its cycles.

This chapter begins with an examination of the two circles associated with the Taoist cosmogony, the Wu-chi and the T'ai-chi. An exploration of the symbolism of these two mandalas leads to an amplification of the three phases of the Taoist cosmos, the One, the Two, and the Three and highlights the centrality of the cycles of ch'i in the alchemical process. Although the properties of ch'i and its cycles have been presented in prior chapters, this revisit of ch'i focuses on its role in the creation of images and consciousness. In addition, the cycles of ch'i are also associated with the attraction that each of the opposites has for the other. A closer look at this attraction not only guides this study to an exploration of the maternal nature of the vital energy but also brings this study to a conclusion. Just as the last stage of the alchemical process, the return to the Source, is followed by a return to daily life, the final discussion of this chapter will address the application of the doctrines of the Taoist cosmogony to our lives and to future inquires of psyche.

The Taoist Cosmogony Revisited

This review of the Taoist cosmogony begins with Jung's (1957/1967) association of the Tao with mandalas. Although his exploration of mandalas includes those found in Christian, Egyptian, Native American, and Buddhist art, Jung limits his discussion of Taoist mandalas to one statement: "The golden flower is the light, and the light of heaven is the Tao" (p. 23). In this statement, Jung recognizes the importance of the mandala as a symbol of the primordial

state. Although this is a reference to the Taoist cosmogony, Jung focuses instead on the mandala's protective quality. He finds that the circle is "intended to prevent the 'outflowing' and to protect the unity of consciousness from being burst asunder by the unconscious" (p. 29) in the meditative practice.

Jung's (1957/1967) interpretation that the circle is a "<u>temenos</u> (sacred precinct)" (p. 24) in the process that brings self-realization is congruent with Robinet's (1992/1997) discussion of circles. She explains that the circle is "often used to illustrate the absolute or illumination" (p. 233) because it represents a circular time that is reversible. Her statement speaks of the circle's polyvalence and emphasizes its importance in Taoist symbology. Jung's association of circles with Taoist alchemy and Robinet's statements that (1) the circle is a symbol of "the constant repetition of cycles" (p. 233) and (2) the circle represents the universe after the creation of the Heaven and Earth support a closer examination of spheres and circles.

Not only is the sphere the basis for the movements of the <u>Tao</u>, it epitomizes the wholeness of the Taoist world-view. The circular movements of the sphere describe an eternal process of creations and deaths and unite the macrocosm and the microcosm. The circular movements also describe the cyclical action of the <u>Tao</u> that is the foundation of the alchemical process. The following discussion of the Taoist mandalas, the <u>Wu-chi</u> and the <u>T'ai-chi</u>, focuses on the relationship of its components, the One, the Two, and the Three.

The Wu-chi and the T'ai-chi

In consideration of the preceding circumambulations that focused on the three stages of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process, the cyclical action of circles is an appropriate subject to begin this closer look at the Taoist cosmogony. As Robinet (1992/1997) claims, the cycle starts anew: it is "the point of departure as the adept thus takes up life all over again" (p. 233). For Jou (1981), the Wu-chi and the T'ai-chi, represent not only the creation of the universe but also the stages of all relationships between people, between objects, and between people and objects. He explains these interactions through the example of an empty room. Wu-chi represents the room before people enter it. When people enter the room, they bring movement and the state of T'ai-chi begins. The situation then has two aspects: "the voidness of Wu-chi is Yin and the something originating from Wu-chi is Yang" (p. 88).

The Wu-chi is a two-dimensional representation of a sphere. As a circle presented without spirals, Wu-chi "means 'what there is before the universe comes into being'" (Jou, 1984, p. 19). According to Wong (1997b), it symbolizes the "stillness in which things are undifferentiated from the origin and the source of life" (p. 124). It is necessary to establish the Wu-chi, the One of the Taoist cosmogony, in order to explore the Two, frequently represented as a mandala with a swirling pattern, the T'ai-chi (see Figure 1). This mandala is a symbol of the separation from the state of wholeness that occurs when the cosmic breaths in the Wu-chi separate simultaneously creating the Two, a binary state consisting

of yang and yin. The separation is the beginning of a cyclical relationship between the One, the Wu-chi, and the Two, the T'ai-chi, that will be subjected to a closer look in the following discussion of the Two that, in turn, sets the foundation for an exploration of the Three of the Taoist cosmogony.

The Two

The Two of the Taoist cosmogony is created by the separation of ch'i from the One. Although prior discussions of ch'i find that its binary nature is known as the "two things" or yin and yang, Jou's (1984) following description of the relationship between yin and yang explains how the Two in the Taoist cosmogony is created:

> If there is no movement in the beginning stage of Tai Chi, then its Yin and Yang are combined, as in a storage battery for electricity. But if there is movement, then Yin and Yang separate and become distinct, just as the battery uses opposite ends of the pole to produce heat, energy, and light. (p. 21)

The Two of the Taoist cosmogony is a potential state in the wholeness of the One. Movement activates the relationship of yin and yang and is represented in the curving line of the T'ai-chi. The curving line describes a rapprochement between the opposites, a state that Chang (1987) addresses in his third verse. According to Chang, the harmonious relationship is due to two intermediaries, heaven-earth and earth-earth. In the words of Jou, the relationship of the One and Two

or yin and yang is "mutually coexisting and inseparable just like two sides of a coin" (p. 88).

The curving line of the T'ai-ch'i is a rendition of the cycles of ch'i and can be associated with the path of the sun-wheel, the sun's annual path through the heavens. Mentioned previously in the discussion of the doctrine of reversal, the path of the sun takes a widening spiral that reverses to one that narrows. The rotations of the sun not only parallel the movements of the Two but also exemplify the relationship between the microcosm and the macrocosm and the Taoist world-view. Taoists believe that the "universe is governed by a changing equilibrium in which the various forces that animate it are never equal, but dominate it in turn in alternating hegemonies" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 11). Also mentioned previously, the alternation occurs, in Robinet's (1992/1997) words, because each principle "reaches its culmination, reverses and turns into its opposite" (p. 241). In short, yang essence alternates with yin life.

Details of the Two and the alternations of the opposites enhance Jung's (1957/1967) statement that the Chinese meditation is the activation of "the light and dark forces of human nature" (p. 25). This review of the Taoist Two amplifies Jung's finding by confirming the following: (1) the foundation of Chinese alchemical meditation is the Tao, the source of the activation of the light and dark forces. (2) The activation of the light and dark forces is possible because of the cosmological separation, the Two of the Taoist cosmogony. The Two is the basis of all creation: every item in the universe is a result of the

separation from the One, the Tao. (3) Although the Two, the vital energy, continues to cycle within every thing, its normal cycles are affected by human senses thus requiring the alchemical process that activates the light and dark forces.

This review of the One and the Two not only enriches Jung's statement about the activation of light and dark forces but is a necessary prelude to the exploration of the Three of the Taoist cosmogony. Another important theme in this study, the Three was not included in Jung's (1957/1967) commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower. The following discussion explains the creation of the Three. As we have seen, the relationship between the One and the Two is a result of the act of separation but the creation of the Three is not as easily apprehended. The creation of the Three is significant to the Chinese alchemical process because it further differentiates the circular movements of the Tao and adds a tri-partite element to the two opposites, the principle of Three.

The Three

The preceding discussion of the One and Two looks at how the Two, the binary nature of ch'i, is a principle of separation. If there is an existing binary principle, how does this create a trinity? The following discussion of the Three, based on details about the creation of the Three found in both Taoist and Western alchemical texts, begins with Taoist perspectives of the Three. Schipper (1982/1993) contributes the following quotation about the creation of the Three:

> The Tao transmitted subtle energies (<u>ch'i</u>) of three colors. They are the Obscure, Primordial, and Initial Energies. The Obscure is blue-black and Heaven; the Initial is yellow and Earth; the Primordial is white and Tao. In the center of these three energies, a distinction was made between high and low, which then gave rise to the Father and Mother of the ten thousand things. (p. 61)

According to Schipper, not only two but also three energies emerge from the wholeness of One. In the separation of the Three from the One, the Two represents a dual movement within the Three.

Robinet (1979/1993) provides additional details about the Three of the Taoist cosmos. She states that the Three is "the original tri-unity of the Three Breaths which animate the world" (p. 187). The fundamental triad "is reflected on the macrocosmic plane as the triad of Heaven, Earth, and Man. Within the microcosm, it corresponds to the Three-Ones" (p. 187). Saso (1990) complements Robinet's statement in his claim that the "tripartite division of the cosmos is reflected within the microcosm by a triple function of the soul-spirit" (p. 19). In other words, <u>ch'i</u> has three functions that manifest as <u>ching</u>, <u>ch'i</u>, and <u>shen</u>. The discussions of these three Taoist scholars help to clarify the relationship between the Two and the Three of the Taoist cosmogony and the phases of <u>ch'i</u> in both the macrocosm and the microcosm.

Western alchemical writings about a tri-unity also amplify the Three of the Taoist cosmogony. Jung's (1951/1969) following discussion of the threefold

sonship of Basilides and the existence of a spirit-soul in Western alchemy amplifies our understanding of the tri-partite aspect in the vital energy:

> In these three emanations of a non-existent God it is not hard to see the trichotomy of spirit, soul, and body. Spirit is the finest and highest; soul, as the ligametnum spiritus et corporis, is grosser than spirit, but has "the wings of an eagle" so that it may lift its heaviness up to the higher regions. Both are of a "subtle" nature and dwell, like the ether and the eagle, in or near the region of light, whereas, the body, being heavy, dark, and impure, is deprived of the light but nevertheless contains the divine seed of the third sonship, though still unconscious and formless. (pp. 64-65)

Jung's discussion corresponds to Robinet's and Saso's findings about a tri-unity and brings another perspective, a trichotomy, to the Three of the Taoist cosmogony.

The threefold sonship of Basilides describes the movements and phases of an energy that corresponds to ch'i. It's dual movement and the three different manifestations that emerge from a non-existent God correspond with the dual movement of ch'i and its three phases as ching, ch'i, and shen that emerge from the One, the Tao. Jung's conclusion that the three phases of the spirit-soul can be applied to the three primal breaths of the Tao: ching, ch'i, and shen are a trichotomy.

Jung (1948/1969) provides yet another discussion that enhances our understanding of the relationship between the Two and the Three. He states that a triad always:

> denotes polarity, since one triad always presupposes another, just as high presupposes low, lightness darkness, good evil. In terms of energy, polarity means a potential, and whenever a potential exists there is a possibility of a current, a flow of events, for the tension of opposites strives for balance. (pp. 234-235)

Applied to ching, ch'i, and shen, Jung's conclusions about triads indicate that this triad "presupposes" the binary nature of ch'i. Stated another way, the Two does not necessarily create the Three but there is Two in the Three. Jung's discussion also reaffirms the cyclical nature of the relationship of the opposites: each part of the pair presupposes its opposite and their cyclical relationship.

A review of Jung's (1957/1967) commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower finds that Jung did not associate a trinity in the cycles of the opposites when he first began his study of alchemy. He does, however, recognize the significance of triads in Western cosmogonies. In addition to the cosmogony of Basilides, Jung's (1955-56/1970) interpretation of the Axiom of Maria whereby three Principles are created from the "quarternio of elements" (p. 459) is similar to Taoist's descriptions of the separation of the vital energy from the Tao. One version of the Axiom of Maria is as follows: "One becomes the two, two becomes three, and out of the third comes the One as the fourth" (Edinger, 1995, p. 276).

According to Jung, the Axiom of Maria is associated with the synthesis of the incorruptible One and, like the Taoist alchemical process, it begins with a separation:

> The separation of the hostile elements corresponds to the initial state of chaos and darkness. From the successive unions arise an active principle (sulphur) and a passive (salt), as well as a mediating, ambivalent principle, Mercurius. This classical alchemical trinity then produces the relationship of male to female as the supreme and essential opposition. (p. 459)

Jung's interpretation of the separation coincides with the Taoist principle of the separation of three subtle energies from which the two, a polarity of the opposites, arise.

The presence of the Three in the cycles of the opposites is an important aspect in the circular movements of the vital energy in both Taoist and Western alchemy. The Three can also be detected in many Western alchemical descriptions: Burckhardt (1960/1967) and Edinger (1985) refer to Ptolemy, Marcrobius, and Hermetic manuscripts that depict the soul's descent from the heavenly realms to earth and its return through concentric circles. For Burckhardt, the drawings of the soul's journey in an anonymous 12th century Hermetic manuscript portray the ascent of the human soul. He notes that "through these circles of the spiritual, psychic, and corporeal worlds men rise to God as if on a ladder" (p. 50). Burckhardt's identification of the phases of the

soul's journey as spiritual, psychic, and corporeal corresponds to the three phases of the vital energy.

This review of the Taoist cosmogony and parallels found in Western alchemy identifies many associations of the cycles of the cosmos and circles. In addition to Jung's conclusions that circular movements represent the act of self-realization and that the circle has protective qualities, the circle symbolizes the movements of a cosmic energy that is an eternal process of creations and separations or deaths. The process is presented through a framework of numbers in which One is the original state of chaotic wholeness. The beginning of movement in the One results in a separation from wholeness, the creation of the Two. Also emerging from the wholeness of One is the Three.

The numbers of the Taoist cosmogony are expressions of a process in which the activation of the universe and all it contains is maintained through a changing equilibrium. The system of numbers expresses the first phase of a cycle, the separation from the One into two opposites. Under natural conditions, the first phase cycles into the second, a reintegration into the One. However, ordinary human consciousness disrupts the normal cycles of the vital energy. As we now know, one method of returning the cycle to its natural reversals is the use of the three-stage alchemical process. The alchemical process refines the vital energy so that it continues its path of eternal cycling and reverses to primordial wholeness.

This review of the Taoist understanding of their cosmos associates circles with the different levels of the cosmos. The phases include the state that exists before the creation of the universe symbolized in the Wu-chi or the One and the creation of the universe and the eternal processes of the universe as depicted in the swirls of the T'ai-chi. The T'ai-chi represents the alternation of polarities, the Two, as well as the movements of all creation, the Three, in both the macrocosm and the microcosm. The following discussion continues this review of the circular movements of the Taoist cosmos and looks at how the cycles of ch'i are associated with consciousness and self-knowledge.

Ch'i

As we have seen, the relationships between the One and the Two and the Two in the Three are cyclical processes or reversals. Robinet (1992/1997) eloquently describes the process of reversal when the vital energy is refined:

> The cyclical process occurs in stages, in a time quite apart from linear time, a cyclical and achronic time during which the materials on which the adept works (lead and mercury, or body, breath, spirit, etc.) are progressively deepened, purified, exalted, in an upward moving, widening spiral that culminates in the universal and the ultimate truth that finally permits escape from the cycle of life and death. (p. 234)

Robinet summarizes the Taoist alchemical tasks as well as its goal of immortality, an experience of eternal time. The experience of immortality occurs when the

cycle of the vital energy reverses to the One. The following discussion follows the cycle of reversal from its first separation that, as we know from a prior analysis of the first two verses in Understanding Reality (Chang 1987), is a death that is also a creation.

Separations and Consciousness

The T'ai-chi, a symbol of the circular movements of ch'i, not only represents the cycles of the opposites, it also is a symbol of an ontological separation. The separation from the One is the origin of consciousness and the creation of Two and is, in the words of Schipper (1982/1993), "the end of Wholeness and Chaos, and the birth of man" (p. 118). According to Robinet (1992/1997), "the world is produced and disappears in the same moment of existence" (p. 233). This movement is a separation, a becoming, and a differentiation into the polarity of yin and yang.

As Schipper (1982/1993) notes, "what was in a diffused state becomes something distinct. With the bursting of the matrix, the energies are divided and thus we perceive things as separate" (p. 115). Robinet (1992/1997) agrees for she claims that ch'i "represents the principle of binary opposition, the principle of difference, without which there can be neither order nor intelligibility . . . and without which there can be no dynamism" (p. 235). The separation from the One brings knowing.

After the separation from the One, this knowing continues on in every particle of the universe through the Two, the vital energy ch'i. The vital energy,

as the earlier exploration of ch'i finds, is also a spark of radiance that is called shen or the vital energy in its phase that is spirit. As a part of every act of knowing, shen is associated with mind. The following look at spirit first explains the association of knowing and spirit through Burckhardt's discussion of spirit. That exploration is followed by a look at the correspondence between the anima mundi and shen as well as spirit and mind.

For Burckhardt (1960/1967), spirit is the cohering element that is a "unifying unconditional and immutable element, which is the source of the more or less hidden 'truth-content' in every piece of knowledge--and without it there would be no truth at all" (p. 35). Moreover, "pure Spirit or Intellect, which as knower and known is absolutely and indivisibly present in every being" (p. 35). It is spirit that "makes its manifold appearances a more or less graspable whole" (p. 34). Burckhardt's conclusion that the Intellect is a cohering element bringing logical coherence to our world is applicable to ch'i as well as shen.

Burckhardt's discussion explains the association of spirit and knowing whereas parallels in Jung's following discussion of the sparks of the anima mundi and Blofeld's statement about shen clarify the association of spirit, mind, and shen. In one of his later studies (after his study of The Secret of the Golden Flower), Jung (1954/1960) finds that the pole of the soul associated with intelligence is a quasi consciousness of the collective unconscious. This quasi consciousness is an illumination, the sparks of the anima mundi. For Jung, the sparks or scintillae are visual illusions in the arcane substance (the

transformative substance) that originate from the world soul: mundi furturi seminarium translated as "seeds of light broadcast in the chaos originate from the world soul" (p. 190). Jung's statement corresponds to Blofeld's (1978) finding that shen "is likened to a spark of spiritual radiance implanted in each man's mind, uniting it to that which lives beyond such transitory developments as the birth and destruction of the universe" (pp. 149-150). There is an indestructible, innate wisdom not only in our minds but also in every particle of the universe.

Bruno (Mendoza, 1995) reaches a similar conclusion. He defines the sparks of radiance from the anima mundi as nous, translated as mind. This principle "is precisely what Anaxagoras called 'mind' and the Stoics, 'the soul of the universe'" (p. 126):

> Bruno contended that the source of cosmic order is not an external cause, but one single internal principle; that this principle pervades the entire universe and does not exist in and by itself either spatially 'outside' or temporally 'before' the universe, but rather that it is immanent in the universe, as the soul is immanent in body, and form in matter. (p. 126)

As a principle of intelligence, the anima mundi corresponds to ch'i, also associated with the principle of all separation, becoming, and differentiation.

In its phase as spirit or shen, ch'i is also known as the light of essence, as noted in a prior discussion of consciousness in Chapter 2. According to The Secret of the Golden Flower (Cleary, 1991b), when people hold their attention to this light, it becomes a thought and thoughts are discrimination, that is,

consciousness. The mind of Tao, the innate wisdom conveyed through shen, brings coherence and intelligibility to our world but it is obscured the instant it becomes consciousness. Master Tzu-yang (Ziyang) (Cleary, 1996) describes the light as the basic essence, an "energy that is congealed and alive" (p. 35). Mind, spirit, and essence are one. However, he reminds us that these components occur in true form and phases in which the true form is affected by emotions. Master Tzu-yang differentiates between the phases of spirit, basic spirit and thinking spirit, as follows:

> It is called basic spirit by virtue of being imbued with the point of living luminescence from Heaven. When this basic spirit is later moved by emotional consciousness, the basic spirit sinks into emotional consciousness and turns into thinking spirit. In reality, even though thought has emotional consciousness, the basic spirit is always complete and whole, never defective nor lacking. If people can turn their attention back to this and detach from their emotional consciousness, then the thinking is none other than a subtle function of the basic spirit! (p. 35)

Master Tzu-yang's differentiation of basic spirit and thinking spirit describes the effects of the body on the vital energy when it cycles from spirit to body. The cycling is both the cause and the cure of the state in which true mind, the mind of Tao, remains intact but is obscured.

Von Franz (1966) restates this occurrence psychologically: "we know today that all thinking which takes place in our ego-consciousness obscures that

'absolute knowledge,' and that an abaissement du niveau mental [dissolution of consciousness] is required before one can approach it" (p. 168). The descent into the unconscious through the alchemical process is one method to achieve an abasissement du nieveau mental so that the light of essence can be refined to its original state of purity. Jung (1957/1967) concludes that the Chinese meditative practice brings such a dissolution of consciousness: "a detachment of consciousness from the world and a withdrawal to a point outside it, so to speak" (p. 44). Although he does not provide details of the process in his first alchemical study, he recognizes that this is an imaginary process for he concludes that the Chinese process "consists solely in observing objectively how a fragment of fantasy develops" (p. 16). Because Jung did not explore how the Chinese imaginary process creates fantasy images, the following discussion takes a closer look at the cycles of the vital energy and how the descent into the unconscious creates images.

Creation of Images

This exploration of the images created during the alchemical process carries on the themes of reversals, the cycling of ch'i, and the association of spirit and mind. Jung (1957/1967) does not specifically state that the Chinese alchemical process is a reversal between body and mind but other alchemical scholars, both Taoist and Western, write about the reversal of the polarity of ch'i or soul from its manifestation as body to a phase where it is spirit. In order to take a closer look at the reversal from body to spirit, the following discussion

first examines the Taoist world-view of wholeness, a wholeness that is maintained by the cycles of the vital energy. A closer look at the Taoist world-view sets the foundation for an exploration of the realm in which the transformative process occurs.

Between Body and Mind

The prior analysis of Chang's (1987) instructions for the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process establishes that the refining process begins with inversion, a descent of conditioned consciousness or Fire, associated with the body, into Water, the unconscious, associated with spirit. As we know, the descent is the first phase of the meeting of body and spirit and that this union occurs in the intermediary realm of ch'i. For the Taoist, this intermediary world is within reach of the practitioner because there is no distinction between body and mind. On the basis of Master Tzu-yang's above discussion of basic spirit and thinking spirit and Kohn's (1992) claim that the "border is within the mind" (p. 170), it can be said that for Taoists, the border is not between body and mind but between states of ultimate truth and states that do not favor ultimate reality.

The body is not separated from the mind for the body itself is a product of the imagination. The personal body is considered to be a "product of the senses; it is an imaginary self built through discriminating consciousness and passions and desires" (Kohn, 1992, p. 170). The cosmic body is also a product of the imaginary realm for it is a replica of the universe and is identified with the cosmos at large and requires nourishment just as much as the physical body. As

we gave seen, quieting the passions of the personal body nourishes the cosmic body, or ch'i.

The Taoist perspective of the body as a product of the imagination can be found in the following I Ching (1950/1967) commentary:

> Underlying reality there is a world of archetypes, and reproductions of these make up the things in the material world. The world of archetypes is heaven, the world of reproductions is the earth: there energy, here matter; there the Creative, here the Receptive. But it is the same tao that is active both in the Creative and in the Receptive. (p. 300)

The Tao, along with its vital energy, is the source of our world and the universe is a reproduction of the Tao. On the basis of the preceding I Ching commentary, it can be said that our world, a reproduction of Heaven, is composed of essence, the form-giving cause that has materialized. In other words, our world is a reproduction of forms created by essence (the active side of soul) and contained or manifested by life (the passive, receptive side of soul).

Ch'i cycles from essence or spiritual phases to material (and vice versa), thus creating the reproductions that make up our material world, but between its most corporeal and ethereal forms, it has an intermediary phase. Robinet (1979/1993) describes the intermediary period as a world of images:

> The world of images, which is fundamentally intermediary in nature, elevates itself above the sensory world to make essences accessible. Yet these essences partake of a visible form since "spirits are embodied and

> bodies are spiritualized." It constitutes a psychic domain of "subtle bodies" which are neither spirit nor matter. (p. 50)

Body is transformed into spirit not only because there is no barrier between the body and mind but also because the transformation occurs in a world where everything can happen: "spirits take physical form and bodies take spiritual form" (p. 122).

Burckhardt (1960/1967) reaches the same conclusion for he states that in the union of the opposites, "'body' must become 'spirit' and 'spirit' 'body'" (p. 86). During the alchemical process, this intermediary phase is experienced when the human intellect "turns away from the multiplicity of things and so to say ascends towards undivided reality" (p. 41). The nature of this reality, according to Burckhardt, "cannot be of a purely rational or discursive kind" (p. 41). He describes a practitioner's experience of this world as follows:

> The world has now become transparent: in its appearances he sees the reflection of eternal 'prototypes'. And even when this insight is not immediately present, the symbols which spring from it nevertheless arouse the memory or 'recollections' of these prototypes. (p. 41)

Burckhardt articulates a world between ideas and words where images are symbols that are neither spirit nor body. Burckhardt's description of the symbols not only agrees with the I-Ching commentary on archetypes but also corresponds to Jung's definition of archetype, primordial images.

Jung (1957/1967) does not refer to congealed psychic energy in his first alchemical study but one of his later studies on psychic images includes a statement about a concentrated form of life energy. In a discussion of imaginatio, Jung (1937/1968) reaches the conclusion that the alchemical imaginatio is "a concentrated extract of the life forces both physical and psychic" (p. 278). Referring to Ruland's definition of imagination, "the star in man, the celestial or super-celestial body" (p. 277), Jung claims that images are something "corporeal, a 'subtle body', semi-spiritual in nature" (p. 277). According to Jung, images are created during the transformation of energy and the "act of imagining, was thus a physical activity that could be fitted into the cycle of material changes" (p. 278). Psychic images are concentrated psychic energy.

Burckhardt's and Jung's findings agree with the Taoist view that there is no border between body and mind, that the archetypes are primordial images, and that the images are condensed energy. In summary, the images are condensed ch'i; for Jung, the alchemical imaginatio is concentrated life extract; and for Burckhardt, the images are congealed Intellect. In addition, Western and Chinese, that is, Taoist alchemy, recognize that psychic images are subtle bodies.

Jung's (1988) study of Nietzsche's Zarathustra contributes additional names and perspectives to the images created in the psychic domain. Jung claims that although Nietzsche intuited spirit in matter as a subtle body, "it is the union of the two [spirit and body] by this thing between" (p. 432). Jung calls it the "body of breath" or "somatic unconscious":

> You see, somewhere, our unconscious becomes material, because the body is the living unit, and our conscious and unconscious are embedded in it: they contact the body. Somewhere there is a place where the two ends meet and become interlocked. And that is the place where one cannot say whether it is matter, or what one calls "psyche." (p. 441)

The subtle body is neither body nor spirit but is the bridge between body and spirit.

A subtle body or psychic image is a condensation of the vital energy that is a state that is neither fully corporeal nor completely ethereal. The notion that the vital energy cycles in a full spectrum from corporeal to ethereal states has been mentioned previously in descriptions of ch'i, Braden's (1997) discussion of Zero Point, and Jou's (1981) discussion of the fourth dimension. Prior descriptions of the vital energy clarify its transformations but this discussion pinpoints when images are created: the vital energy or ch'i condenses into forms and images when it is neither matter nor spirit. In addition, this discussion points out that psychic images are as "real" as objective images. Just as body, soul, and spirit are different phases of the same energy, outer and inner realities are different condensations of this great energy.

The preceding discussion of psychic images brings yet another perspective to ch'i as well as its cycles that permeate the entire universe and are eternally changing its forms. In its intermediary phase, these forms are psychic images or subtle bodies. The images contain an innate intelligence as do the cycles of the

vital energy. This wisdom is known as the te of the Tao. The following exploration of the te begins with a look at the interpretation and meaning of te because it is frequently translated as "virtue" such as in a prior discussion of ch'i in Chapter 2 (see page 200).

The Te of the Tao

The word virtue is associated with moral excellence, but it can also mean an "effective force or power" (Webster's II New College Dictionary, 1995, p. 1234). According to Henricks (Lao-tzu, 1989), Lao-tzu uses te in his text as life-energy and as morality. As the life-energy of the Tao, the te is an "energy or power, a power that is not static but constantly on the move, inwardly pushing each thing to develop and grow in a certain way, in a way that is in accord with its true nature" (p. xix). Other Taoist scholars agree. Schipper (1982/1993) recognizes te as a "creative power" (p. 123) of the Tao. Waley (1958) translates te as a "power 'that could shift Heaven and Earth'" (p. 58).

In Western alchemy, von Franz's (1979) interpretation of The Chemical Philosophy includes a discussion of virtue presented as a hypostasis, Virtus. Von Franz notes that the word virtus is "the same word as the English word virtue" (p. 91). Stating that the root of this word is vir, man, von Franz defines virtue as "male activity, efficiency, effectiveness, so to speak" (p. 91). Her emphasis on the less familiar meaning of virtue is applicable to the vital energy of the Tao and reaffirms that its power is purposeful.

Robinet's (1992/1997) description of the vital energy as "an immanent life force in the world that is knowable only in the various changing aspect it assumes"(p. 8) speaks of its intelligence:

> Because of this dual possibility of residing in a form and going beyond it qi [ch'i] gives form to (zao) and transforms (hua) everything, in a two-sided operation, since it defines the fixed form but also changes it constantly. (p. 8)

The cycles of ch'i are not random but are efficacious as are its images.

This property is noted in Bruno's (Mendoza, 1995) description of the images of the anima mundi:

> It behooves you to copulate with the soul of the world, and once you have copulated with it, to act, for it is teeming with rational forms, and it generates a world full of similar rational forms. And these forms (Plotinus would agree) shape and form in seed everything that exists, like tiny worlds. (p. 31)

Bruno's findings correspond to the te of the Tao. The images created in the psychic domain are rational.

In its intermediary phase, when it has not yet condensed to a corporeal state and it is not yet completely formless, ch'i eternally creates images that are neither body nor spirit. This exploration of psychic images created in this intermediary realm and the te identifies an innate wisdom in the images. If the images are demonstrations of the wisdom and purposefulness of the Tao, so

must all the cycles of the vital energy contain an immanent intelligence. The following discussion looks at the other forms of consciousness associated with the cycles of the vital energy.

The Cycles of Consciousness

The act of separation from the One begins a cycle recognized in both Taoist and Western alchemy. Taoist alchemy uses ch'i to describe the cycle of separation and reintegration as well as the polarity between the opposites whereas Western alchemy refers to the cycles in terms of the spirit-soul. This exploration of the cycles of consciousness that are associated with the separation from the One incorporates astrological references found in Western alchemy that amplify the polarities of ch'i and the cycles of consciousness. The astrological view found in Western alchemy provides a framework in which the polarities of the soul and concomitant levels of consciousness in each polarity can be differentiated. Burckhardt's (1960/1967) discussion of the symbolism of the planet Saturn and Earth's moon is such an example:

> Saturn, whose orbit is the widest from the point of view of the earth, corresponds to intelligence, or more exactly, to the intellect, while the moon, whose orbit is nearest to the earth-centre, is analogous to the 'vital spirit' which binds soul and body to each other. These are the two outer most poles of the soul's capacity, for the vital spirit, which governs the involuntary activities of the body, such as growth and digestion, and

> which for this reason, has an 'existential' rather than a 'rational' character, is in a certain sense opposed to the intellect. (p. 84)

The relationship between the polarity of knowing and being is associated with two extreme points in our solar system. The difference between Saturn and Earth's moon corresponds to the differentation of the innate wisdom in the polarities, yin and yang: at one extreme the wisdom manifests in our intellect or mind; at the opposite pole, innate wisdom can be found in the involuntary but efficient workings of our bodies.

In addition to the polarity of Saturn and the moon, Western alchemists use the planets of our solar system to represent other phases of knowing contained between the two opposites. An example is Edinger's (1985) citation of Macrobius who describes soul's journey to earth and the levels of knowing it acquires in its journey as follows:

> In the sphere of Saturn it obtains reason and understanding, called logistikon and theoretikon; in Jupiter's sphere, the power to act, called practikon; in Mars' sphere, a bold spirit or thymikon; in the sun's sphere, sense-perception and imagination, aisthetikon and phantastikon; in Venus' sphere, the impulse of passion, epithyhymetikon; in Mercury's sphere, the ability to speak and interpret, hermeneutikon; and in the lunar sphere, the function of molding and increasing bodies, phytikon. This last function being the farthest removed from the gods, is the first in us and all the earthly creation. (p. 134)

The descent of soul from the higher realms corresponds to the separation of ch'i from the One. After separating from the wholeness of Heaven the soul first acquires the qualities of knowing in the realms farthest from earth. At this state, the beginning of a cycle, soul has the characteristics of spirit, or yang. It completes its descent into corporeality with the acquisition of the qualities of being that correspond to yin qualities. In short, soul acquires the qualities that are associated with corporeality as it condensates into matter.

The preceding differentiation of soul into a polarity of knowing and being or spirit and body identifies even greater details about the cycles of consciousness. The journey of the spirit-soul or the vital energy that began with a separation from the primordial state and its subsequent manifestation in matter is one part of the cycle of consciousness. As we know, the purity of celestial consciousness is not maintained in human beings and it transforms into its polar opposite, conditioned consciousness, through ordinary "compulsions of senses and objects" (Cleary, 1996, p. 54). In the conditioned state, the natural flowing action of ch'i is disrupted as is the tension between its two poles.

As Jung (1912/1966) states, "every process is a phenomenon of energy, and that all energy can proceed only from the tension of opposites" (p. 29). The loss of tension interrupts the cycle of the soul-spirit and the second part of the cycle is affected: when the flow of ch'i is disrupted, it is not able to transform into its polar opposite. The vital energy instead continues its outward path resulting

in a consciousness that looks outward, an externally focused spirit. Figure 8 is a diagram of the two states of consciousness:

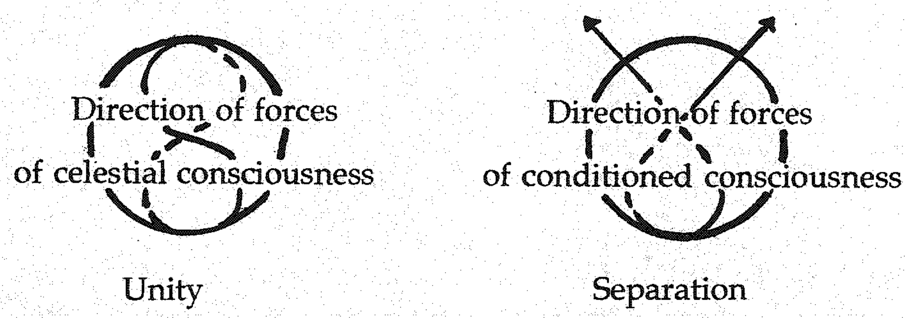


Figure 8. The Flow of Ch'i in Celestial and Conditioned Consciousness

In the state of conditioned consciousness, an external focus further separates mind and matter.

This separation is a psychological state that Jung (1957/1967) addresses in his commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower:

> The stronger and more independent our consciousness becomes, and with it the conscious will, the more the unconscious is thrust into the background, and the easier it is for the evolving consciousness to emancipate itself from the unconscious archetypal pattern. Gaining in freedom, it bursts the bonds of mere instinctuality and finally reaches a condition of instinctual atrophy. This uprooted consciousness can no longer appeal to the authority of primordial images; it has Promethean freedom, but it also suffers from godless hybris. (p. 12)

Jung's statement about instinctual atrophy corresponds to the obscuring of celestial consciousness. The balance appears to tip towards ego-consciousness

but Jung suggests that the balance is counter-weighted in the unconscious. Although he did not explicitly associate this phenomenon to the reversal process, Jung is describing one phase of the cycle of the vital energy.

This phase, the transformations of ego-consciousness or its analog, conditioned consciousness, to its polar opposite, celestial consciousness, is depicted in the following diagram, Figure 9. When ch'i is nourished, that is, the passions of the body are quieted, mixed-up thoughts are eliminated, and the externally focused spirit is re-collected, ch'i resumes its natural flow. Refining ch'i brings the second phase of the refining process, the transformation of conditioned consciousness to a third level of consciousness known as an awareness of the Tao in Complete Reality Taoism. Psychologically, this is a state of flexible consciousness, a paradoxical consciousness. In the process of alchemical meditation, it is possible to reach the third phase when flexible consciousness is refined to an even higher level, that is, a state of spiritual consciousness. At this level, there is a congealing of physical time with eternal time. When this occurs, the experience of consciousness, explored in the prior chapter, is an experience of immortality. The experience is usually described in poetic terms that reflect the presence of the images of ch'i.

The four levels of consciousness, celestial, conditioned, flexible, and spiritual are cycles of ch'i that form a quarternity that is depicted in Figure 9.

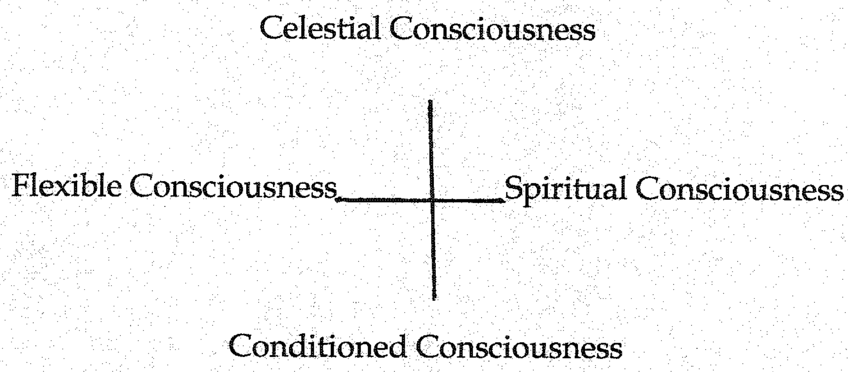


Figure 9. A Quarternity: the Four Levels of Consciousness

Quarternities, twice bi-sected circles, are symbols of wholeness. As Jung (1957/1967) notes in his commentary, mandalas "show a distinct tendency towards a quarternary structure reminiscent of the Pythagorean tetraktys" (p. 22). The alchemical process unites two pairs of opposites and is a return to the wholeness of the primordial state.

This exploration of the different states of consciousness enriches our knowledge of the nature of ch'i. Ch'i is present in everyone as an inner wisdom: celestial consciousness, the mind of Tao. Although the separation of ch'i from the primordial wholeness brings consciousness, the very act of discrimination obscures cosmic wisdom. The alchemical process promotes the natural flow of ch'i to transform conditioned consciousness into a third level of consciousness, a flexible consciousness that brings self-knowledge. Flexible consciousness can be transformed into a spiritual consciousness, an experience of eternal time.

The exploration of ch'i and its cycles expands Jung's claims about the circle and the creation of fantasy material. The cycles of the vital energy are not only manifestations of the power of the Tao but also its wisdom. When body and mind are stilled, the vital energy is nourished and it follows the natural course of action of the te, defined as a proficient power. The course of the te can be detected in Western alchemical descriptions of the soul's journey through the planetary realms that differentiate between states of knowing and states of being. These cycles of the vital energy articulate the wholeness that is within each of us and between each individual and the universe. The preceding discussion highlights the wisdom and purposefulness of the vital energy whereas the following exploration looks at its loving and maternal nature.

The Great Sphere

In Jou's (1981) discussion of the Wu-chi and the T'ai-chi, he demonstrates how the circular flow of energy from both clockwise and counter clockwise directions result in the spirals of the T'ai-chi. Images of spirals are found everywhere in our universe such as in the tiniest shell, on weather patterns shown on television news reports, and in photographs of giant nebulas in deep space. Not the least are the spirals portrayed in models of DNA: the double helixes that are the building blocks of all living creatures. All of the spirals, enormous and minute, are contained in the great sphere of the Tao. This closer look at the spiraling energy that brings changes and eternally defines forms

carries on the theme of circles and focuses first on its cohering aspect and then on its ability to contain all of creation.

In an earlier discussion of the separation that brings consciousness, the vital energy in the form of shen or spirit is identified as that which brings coherence to our world. This cohering property can also be an adhesive that attaches to every particle of creation, body as well as mind. The cohesiveness is a property of the vital energy. As Edinger (1985) claims, glue, gum, and resin are synonyms for psychic energy or, in Edinger's words, the transforming substance. Edinger bases his interpretation on the correspondence between "the life force (vis animans)" (p. 223) and "the 'glue of the world' (glutinum mundi) which is the medium between mind and body and the union of both" (p. 223). On the basis of Edinger's interpretation, it can be said that the vital energy not only brings coherence to our world but also holds the opposites, mind and body, together. The following discussion examines the cohesiveness of the vital energy.

Love

Coherence and adhesiveness are also the properties of love. In this study, the role of love in the alchemical process first emerged in the literature review of Dorn's active imagination, "The Chemical Philosophy" (von Franz, 1979). In that work, partaking of the water from the well of love brings the opposites together. Chang's (1987) equivalent to the well of love, noted in the analysis of his third verse and the final stage of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process, are the go-betweens, heaven-earth and earth-earth, components that bring the two

opposites together. The go-betweens exemplify the harmony and devotion that unite the opposites. In addition to the go-betweens, Chang also refers to union of the opposites in terms and images of love. These include his statement that "Wood, the essence, loves the righteousness of Metal; Metal, sense, loves the benevolence of Wood" (p. 135) as well as metaphors such as the intertwining dragon and tiger and conjoining of husband and wife. These metaphors are examples of how the love between the opposites is frequently presented in Taoist alchemical literature.

Love between husband and wife and sex are metaphors that represent the joy that comes with the act of creation at the cosmic level of humanity. For Schipper (1982/1993), not only is the union of opposites equivalent to a love that spreads throughout the body and "engages the body as a whole" (p. 154), but coition also expresses the alchemical experience of Chaos as a "joyful delight" (p. 155). Impressed by the many Taoist references to love and sex, Schipper includes a detailed explanation of the misunderstandings of the Taoist view of love and sex. He concludes that the "vast erotic literature" (p. 146) evident in early China indicates that sex in China was held to be sacred.

For Schipper (1982/1993), the union of opposites is "the act of love itself, as though coitus and gestation were one and joined in a single process" (p. 144). The love of the Tao is manifested as a creative process that frees "our energies from the shackles of concepts" (p. 158). Schipper finds a correspondence between the creative process of the union of opposites and self-mastery: "the fusion of yin

and yang at the Center comes in a moment of self-mastery, in love, or in artistic creation; one may find it in calligraphy, in poetry, dance, or in all other forms of art. Once accomplished, this chaotic structure is abandoned as a sacrifice, and sublimated" (pp. 158-159). The love between the opposites is associated with the act of creation: love is itself experienced in the act of creativity. In other words, the union of opposites is a creative act that expresses the love of the Tao.

Robinet (1992/1997), however, defines the attraction between the opposites as a desire. In her discussion of the four parent I Ching trigrams, she claims the following: It is "the desire of Qian [Heaven] for Kun [Earth] and that of Kun for Qian" (p. 251) that create the "mixed trigrams Li [Fire] and Kan [Water] and reveal themselves as resembling human desires; hence the alchemical task should be to reverse the process, to re-establish Qian and Kun in their purity" (p. 251). Robinet's discussion reminds us that our conditioned consciousness is a result of the attraction of the soul to the body and hence, the need for the alchemical process.

The same condition is the focus of the following Western alchemical discussions of desire and love. For Edinger (1985), desire is concupiscence that is generated by the lesser coniunctio, "a union of fusion of substances that are not yet thoroughly separated or discriminated" (p. 211). According to Edinger, concupiscence differs from transpersonal love as transpersonal love both generates and is generated by the greater coniunctio, "the goal of the opus, the supreme accomplishment" (p. 211). Edinger's conclusion that the alchemical

process begins with desire but is transformed into transpersonal love amplifies Robinet's discussion about desire between Fire and Water. The alchemical process that transforms these mixed trigrams back to a state of purity also transforms desire to transpersonal love. This dynamic is graphically represented in the purity, that is, the solid lines in the trigrams Heaven and Earth and the mixture of lines in Fire and Water. In short, the attraction between Fire and Water is desire whereas the attraction between Heaven and Earth is a transpersonal love.

Von Franz (1951/1966) cites several Western alchemical treatises that elaborate the difference between the two forms of love. In her commentary on Aurora Consurgens, she writes about Bernard of Clairvaux who posits that "all higher love and even our love of God begins first with concuspiscentia, for this is the natural impulse of every creature for its own perfections" (p. 180). This is paralleled by St. Thomas who states that concuspiscentia or desiderium is a "movement towards goodness" (p. 181). Through her study of these ancient texts, von Franz concludes that love begins with desire but desire can be transformed into transpersonal love. She claims that "the movement of loving is thus circular, and love is the real unitive force" (p. 181). Her statement about the movement of love can be applied to the movement of ch'i: its circular movements begin with a desire for its opposite but desire is transformed into transpersonal love as ch'i cycles into its opposite pole.

The preceding exploration of love brings greater elaboration to the cycles of ch'i: the alternations of desire and love. Not only are there reversals of desire and love in the cycles of ch'i but this exploration of love highlights the creative and devotional properties of ch'i. These qualities as well as its ability to contain the whole universe speak of an energy that has a feminine nature. The following discussion, a more detailed look at the feminine nature of the cycles of ch'i, begins with an exploration of a maternal energy documented in the Tao-te ching, the I Ching, as well as the Sapienta Dei found in Western alchemy. This exploration leads to a discussion of libido myths that presents a psychological perspective of the path the psychic energy takes in the process of self-knowledge.

The Creatrix of the Universe

In this study, the feminine nature of the Tao first emerged in a discussion in the literature review that noted that Su Nu (Basic Woman) passed the ancient knowledge of Taoism to Huang-Ti, one of the ancestors of Complete Reality Taoism. Von Franz (1980) documents a similar passing of alchemical knowledge from the feminine to the masculine in her interpretation of an Old Greek text, "The Prophetess Isis to her Son." Isis, an ancient Egyptian goddess, obtains the alchemical secrets from an angel and passes it on to her son, Horus. The movement from feminine to masculine at the inception of alchemy is paralleled in Taoist and Western alchemy.

The passing from the feminine, the mother, to the masculine, the son, speaks of the maternal nature of the vital energy. The maternal properties of the

Tao are documented as early as the Ta Chuan commentary in the I Ching (1980) that states the following: "It manifests itself as kindness but conceals its workings. It gives life to things, but it does not share the anxieties of the holy sage. Its glorious power, its great field of action, are of all things, the most sublime" (p. 299). Here, according to the I Ching, the action of the Tao is that of a mother's love for her child.

The notion that the Tao has a maternal nature continues in the Tao-te ching. According to Henricks (Lao-tzu, 1989), Lao-tzu "refers to the Tao as the 'Mother' in no less than five places--in chapters 1, 20, 25, 52, and 59" (p. xix). In addition to these five chapters, Waley (1958) refers us to the oft-quoted sixth chapter:

> The valley-spirit never dies.
> It is named the Mysterious Female.
> And the Doorway of the Mysterious Female
> Is the base from which Heaven and Earth sprang.
> It is there within us all the while;
> Draw upon it as you will, it never runs dry. (p. 149)

Waley associates the valley-spirit with the water-spirit, a creative energy, for it is "by absorbing the water-spirit (shui-shen) that vegetation lives, 'that the root gets its girth, the flower its symmetries, the fruit its measure'" (p. 56). Waley concludes that the way to the Tao is through the "negative, passive, 'female' element alone" (p. 57).

The sixth verse of the Tao te ching describes a feminine power that is eternal and present in all creation (Heaven and Earth) for it is inexhaustible. In the words of Shafer (1980), the Tao "is no abstract entity like Spinoza's 'God,' the ultimate source of real existence but rather a Great Mother, an eternal womb from which emerges all of the particular entities that populate this ephemeral world" (p. 42). In its selfless mothering "all things depend on it for life, and it does not turn away from them" (Lao-tzu, 1989, p. xix). Other Taoists agree that the return to the Tao is a return to the Great Mother.

In Blofeld's (1978) description of the Tao, the maternal aspect is demonstrated by its nurturance, an effortless ability that "replenishes lack and diminishes excess, accomplishing all that is required without forethought, strain, or hurry" (p. 44). For Schipper (1982/1993), not only are "those who nourish the embryo of immortality" (p. 126) mothers, the Mother is the conduit through which the multiple aspects of the Tao as it passes from the invisible to the visible can be seen: "The Tao has taken form in her. Through her the Tao has been revealed" (p. 125). The Tao is the mother and transformer of all the myriad forms.

This belief continues in Complete Reality Taoism. Chang (1987) devotes two verses to the mysterious female: (1) "If you want to attain the eternal immortality of the Valley Spirit, you must set the foundation on the mysterious female" (pp. 97-98); and (2) "Rare are those in the world who know the opening of the mysterious female" (p. 99). According to Li Ch'ing-an (Qing-an) (Cleary,

1996), "mysterious means subtle. Female refers to the fact that emptiness is where things are born" (p. 39). The mysterious female is a symbol of a feminine energy that is the very foundation of the alchemical process.

References to the feminine nature of psychic energy are also found in Western alchemy. This is not surprising considering von Franz's (1980) study of the ancient Egyptian text mentioned above. An example is Sophia, the Sapientia Dei, "who is a coeternal and more or less hypostatized pneuma of feminine nature that existed before the Creation" (Jung, 1960/1969, p. 24). The prior to heaven energy of the Sapientia Dei parallels cosmic ch'i. Von Franz (1951/1966) provides other details of the personification of psychic energy that appears in the guise of Sapientia Dei or Wisdom, "a divine feminine figure" (p. 157) in the following discussion.

As does ch'i, Wisdom, according to von Franz (1951/1966), is the source of long life and health and is eternal: "She can "bestow unending life without ever exhausting herself . . . . She gives the prime impulse towards all being and all knowing in their endlessly diverse forms, and as an inexhaustible vitalizing principle her range of action is unlimited" (p. 165). Jung (1937/1968) indicates that the author of the Aurora identifies Wisdom with the "Queen of the South" and the Holy Spirit "presumably because it is hot and dry" (p. 386). For that reason, von Franz concludes that Wisdom, as does the Holy Spirit "warms all things with the fire of love" (p. 159). The properties of Wisdom or the Sapienta Dei are analogous with the vital energy of the Tao.

The return to a feminine energy, the Great Mother, is also portrayed in what Jung (1912/1967) designates as libido myths. Jung does not refer to libido in the Freudian sense that limits it to sexual energy but to psychic energy. As psychic energy, libido is synonymous with ch'i, the energy of the Tao. For Jung, the typical elements of libido myths include original bisexuality and a return to the mother followed by a resurrection. An example of this process is his interpretation of the myth of Kaineus. Citing Pindar, a Greek poet who lived from approximately 518 to 438 BCE, Jung relates the legend in which Kaineus, originally a maiden, was changed by Poseidon into an "invulnerable man" (p. 289), a reference to bisexuality. The return to the mother is evident in Kaineus' descent into the depths, a feat he accomplished by splitting the earth with his foot. The return to the Mother is also represented in his battle with the Lipithae where Kaineus was completely covered by trees "because that was the only way that they could get at him" (p. 289). Some say Kaineus was thrust down into the depths of the earth by the weight of the trees but the legend does not end there for "from the midst of the pile of trees" (p. 289), a golden plover ascended into the air. Kaineus is resurrected as a soul-bird--immortality through entry into the mother.

Jung's interpretation of the myth of Kaineus can be linked to his discussion of Gnostic themes, the legend of Oedipus, mentioned previously in the literature review. In his discussion of the legend of Oedipus, Jung points out the need for the krater, the uterus necessary for rebirth. The legend of Kaineus

and the Gnostic <u>krater</u> not only highlight the association of the quest for immortality and the return to feminine energy but also provide a psychological perspective for those adults who undertake the task of self-knowledge, that is, bringing consciousness to unconscious content. In the quest for self-knowledge, Jung (1912/1967) propounds that "the mother-symbol no longer connects back to the beginnings, but points to the unconscious as the creative matrix of the future. 'Entry into the mother' then means establishing a relationship between the ego and the unconscious" (p. 301). Eliade (1956/1962) agrees for he states that "the 'return to the mother' translates a spiritual experience corresponding to any other 'projection' outside Time--in other words, to the reintegration of a primal situation" (p. 155). Jung's interpretation of libido myths and Eliade's statement emphasize that the return to the primordial state, a union of the opposites, is a return to a feminine energy.

The feminine energy is eternally creative and a selfless nurturer. In both Western and Taoist alchemy, the return, a reintegration to wholeness that follows the separation from the primordial state, is possible because of the love of the maternal energy. This love is evident in the return to the creative matrix for this event liberates our restricted energies and opens our minds to new attitudes. In short, we experience a rebirth. The return to the Great Mother, however, does not end there for as all cycles do, it is followed by a return to the starting point. The following discussion brings this study full circle, a return to the outer world.

Conclusion

The exploration of the maternal source that is "a state at once the point of emergence and the ultimate end of all things" (Robinet, 1992/1997, p. 192) brings this study of Understanding Reality (Chang, 1987) to a conclusion. As does the alchemical process, the following discussion returns to the point of departure. What began as a depth-psychological study of Chinese alchemy has evolved into an experience of the power of the Tao and a world-view that maintains the wholeness of the universe, the unity of the macrocosm and the microcosm.

In addition, this exploration of the Taoist cosmogony enriches our understanding of the central role of the Tao and the relationship between the two opposites the emerge from the Tao. The Tao is the source of a feminine aspect that contains the two opposites together in harmony and a masculine part that is the source of its ability to separate from the primordial state. The masculine yang enables the feminine yin to reach its full potential and the feminine enables the masculine to have finite existence. This relationship demonstrates the love of the Tao and is a model for all human relationships. The vital energy of the Tao links us with our world through love and without which there would be no world.

The preceding exploration of ch'i enriches Jung's (1957/1967) study of the Taoist meditative process by augmenting his finding that "not only consciousness, but life itself must be intensified" (p. 21). Meditation can indeed "intensify" the vital energy for Chang's (1987) instructions tell us how to nurture

ch'i and to return the cycles of ch'i to their natural alternations so that ch'i can be transformed into the gold elixir. Present in every particle in the universe, ch'i not only creates consciousness but also is responsible for the logical coherence of the world. Its power is seen in such diverse ways as the autonomous growth of things and the creation of images. Through its cycles of reversal, this great energy transforms unconscious content to consciousness and also transforms linear time to eternal time. Most importantly, an awareness of ch'i and its various phases helps us to live life in wholeness and to understand the images that we create.

One way of incorporating an alchemical way of knowing and being in daily life is to approach life with an awareness of the presence of the Tao, an awareness of the immanence of celestial knowledge. An understanding of the components of the Taoist cosmogony as well as the workings of ch'i helps to bring new perspectives to our journey through life: we are part of a universe that is changing continuously. The energy that creates life is continually transforming each of us just as it eternally transforms from corporeal to spiritual phases and vice versa. This energy is the source of our consciousness as well as fantasy images that emerge through meditation, active imagination, and in dreams.

The wisdom inherent in the vital energy is available to each of us and can be used to enrich our lives. The alchemical process offers a model that can help people to develop to their full potential. In order to reach this wisdom, Chang

(1987) suggests inversion so that body and mind can become still. The quieting of body and mind allows the flow of vital energy to crystallize into images. These images help to bring insight to problems: self-knowledge. Allowing the circular energy to flow in its natural paths, in Jung's (1957/1967) words, creates a new attitude and a "reversal of one's nature" (p. 18). The reversal "brings an enlargement, a heightening and enrichment of the personality" (p. 18).

An awareness of the reversals of ch'i is thus applicable to the therapeutic process. It offers a framework that can enhance our perspectives of transference phenomena (unconscious material that the individual projects onto the analyst) as well as the establishment and maintenance of the therapeutic environment. As noted in the beginning of this chapter, ch'i is associated with the mandala, a symbol of the temenos and the process that brings self-knowledge. Many depth psychologists currently recognize that the creation of a sacred precinct is a necessary step in the therapeutic process. In the following discussion, the cycles of ch'i contribute another framework that can be applied to the contemporary view of the therapeutic environment.

Moore (1991) presents recent findings of the creation of a sacred space and addresses such a therapeutic environment. He first differentiates between sacred and profane spaces and then explores the need for the ritual context of psychopathology. His statements about the profane space are as follows:

> In profane space there is no fixed point or center from which one can gain orientation. There is no contact with the really real, with the power that

> alone can renew life and through which regeneration can occur. Profane space is a formless expanse, homogeneous in its fundamental unreality. It is a space essentially devoid of creativity. Rather than persons and things being created or renewed in profane space, it is in fact the locus of deterioration of the cosmos as ordinary duration, profane time, runs its course. (p. 15)

Moore, although not using alchemical language, provides a psychological view of profane space and linear time that is the polar opposite of the sacred space and circular time that occurs through the natural alternations of ch'i.

Moore (1991) then presents three important components of the temenos that are necessary for the process of self-knowledge: (1) an environment that allows the individual to temporarily surrender autonomy; (2) an environment that allows the individual to maintain the needed orientation and structure during the time of deconstruction of the old personality structure; and (3) a place where unconscious material can manifest without, as Moore states, "unnecessarily terrorizing the analysand" (p. 27). For Moore, the containment provided by a sacred space "does not guarantee that a transformative field will be constituted--but its absence will either inhibit the emergence of materials from the deeper levels of the unconscious or make such an emergence more dangerous for both the analyst and analysand" (p. 27).

The circular space created by the paths of ch'i meets the above three requirements that Moore (1991) identifies. Ch'i not only creates a boundary that

can be a safe container for deconstruction of the old personality but also provides an immanent wisdom that helps to maintain orientation. In the lexicon of the Taoist world-view, it can be said that the passive pole of ch'i provides the container, a vessel that protects the unity of consciousness. For Moore's second requirement, the active pole of ch'i as essence or shen, is an immanent knowing that is present in all of the cycles of ch'i. This knowing is an axis that can maintain the orientation needed during the time of the deconstruction. The natural cycling of ch'i fulfills Moore's third requirement, the creation of an intermediary realm, the realm between body and mind. This intermediary space is the locus where images and thoughts arise and the transformation of the old personality structure can occur. In this transformative field that lies between words and ideas, intensely defended and cherished feelings and thoughts that have long been forgotten or repressed can be brought to awareness.

As we have seen, ch'i is eternally alternating within each thing and between things so that cycles of ch'i not only alternate between the consciousness and the unconscious of the individual but also between the two people in the therapy space. Ch'i is the source of the reciprocity between the individual and the analyst as well as the energy that maintains the relationship. The reciprocity between the individual and the analyst incorporates the outer, the individual's living situation, with inner reflections, a merging of the unconscious of the analyst and the individual. In short, the transference process.

Furthermore, the properties of ch'i that transform corporeality to the ethereal state and its converse movement from formlessness have a major role in the temenos. The ethereal images that arise in the sacred space condense into graspable form through the dialogue between the two, the analyst and the individual. The analyst, by monitoring the patterns that the individual describes, is then able to help bring the underlying archetype to the surface. The individual's experience of the archetype can be a signpost that points to the past and old ways of thinking and being. The archetype also points to the future by identifying new perspectives and new possibilities that can be incorporated into daily life. Thus, the cycles of ch'i have an essential role in the deconstruction of the old personality structure and its transformation to new ways of thinking and innovative behaviors. This application of the workings of ch'i to the therapeutic process is offered as a contribution to Moore's (1991) appeal for more inquiry into the geography of the sacred space.

The review of the Taoist cosmogony and the role of its vital energy identifies many correspondences between ch'i and depth-psychological theories of psychic energy. This affinity strengthens the bond that has been established between Chinese alchemy and depth psychology and encourages future inquiries. Just as the framework of a universe that is "a pool of energetic fluid" (Chuang-tzu, 1981) that eternally transforms between its three phases, body, soul, and spirit brings different perspectives that enhance Jung's first alchemical study, the doctrines of the Taoist cosmogony can enrich other studies of the

objective psyche. Likely examples include one of Jung's (1912/1967) earliest works, Symbols of Transformation, as well as one of his latest, Aion (1969/1951).

In the earlier study, Jung (1912/1967) looks at psyche as "an energy mechanism" (Edinger, 1994, p. 3) and its transformative aspects. These two factors have an affinity with the Taoist cosmogony and can be the basis of another interpretation that can enrich Jung's study of psyche. The correspondences between Jung's studies of psyche and the Taoist cosmogony continue in Aion, a study Jung (1969/1951) completed when he was 76 years old. The word aion, according to Edinger (1996a), is not only used to refer to psyche but also is the root of two Greek words that can be associated with ch'i: "aionios meaning without beginning or end, eternal, or forever; and aidios meaning eternal" (p. 15). The parallels with the circular path of the Tao and its eternal energy ch'i and psyche continue throughout Aion from its title to its final pages wherein Jung presents a circular structure that illustrates the dynamics of psyche.

The similarities highlighted in the aforementioned texts and the Taoist world-view that maintains the wholeness of nature and spirit as well as its antecedents of mysticism encourage further studes that can contribute to a deeper understanding of "the unconscious as an objective and collective psyche" (Jung, 1912/1967, p. xxiv). In addition, the Taoist cosmogony provides a structure that will help clinicians grasp the symbols that arise from the unconscious. Although this analysis of the Complete Reality Taoism alchemical process cannot conclude that the Taoist cosmogony is also at the root of Western

alchemical symbols, it has identified many correpondences in Taoist and Western alchemy and an affinity between Taoism and depth psychology. Verification of Needham's (1980) position, noted in the literature review, that Chinese alchemy predates Western alchemy and became established in the West through the Old Silk Road is left for another study.

This review of the workings of psyche or ch'i not only supports the continuing relationship between Taoist alchemy and depth psychology in future inquiries but also in my life. An understanding of the Taoist cosmogony enhances my clinical work and enriches my life in two other ways. The first is the finding that birth and death are transitions in the cycle of the vital energy. Although life is a preparation for death, other equally important transitions need to be acknowledged and celebrated. The second is that human beings are cosmic creatures who have the ability and the responsibility to bring consciousness to unconscious content. The second lesson answers an existential question that has brought purpose to my life whereas the first dispels fear of aging and death.

In addition, this study fulfills my original intention to explore my cultural roots. I now have an appreciation for the depth of Chinese wisdom and an appreciation that many personal interests that I once thought were thoroughly Western are Chinese. These interests include a belief that we are all connected, an interest in the feminine, the study of symbols and images, and of course, an interest in psyche. This study of Complete Reality Taoism has allowed me to

assemble these personal interests into a wholeness that enriches my life. In the words of my analyst, this study has helped me to find my own mythology.

Summary

This chapter brings together findings from an analysis of Chang's Understanding Reality that expands Jung's (1957/1967) commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower. The analysis of Chang's verses reveals the foci of the three stages of the alchemical process, first on the body, second on the mind, and third on the spiritual. The three stages correspond to the refining of the three phases of the vital energy, ching, ch'i, and shen. Lying beneath the alchemical tasks is the archetype of the movements of the great and wonderful energy of the Tao. This exploration of the Taoist cosmogony as symbolized in the circles of the Wu-chi and the T'ai-chi identifies additional details about the workings of the Tao through its energy, ch'i. This energy is the source of the creation of images and the transformation of unconscious content to consciousness. Just as body, soul, and spirit are a tri-unity of ch'i, the four levels of consciousness, celestial, conditioned, flexible, and spiritual, are different phases of ch'i. Further exploration of ch'i identifies its wholeness and its polarity, a feminine part that contains and a masculine force that is the source of its ability to separate and to move throughout the universe.

Perhaps the most important lesson that this study of alchemy offers is the knowledge that the power of this creative principle is available to everyone. This

intelligent power can be a source for healing those of us who have strayed off the path. By quieting our minds and senses, we can reach out to this loving energy. According to Chang's (1987) instructions for the alchemical process, the gold elixir is achieved through knowledge of this creative power and sincere effort. In the process of inversion, contradictions are reconciled in the stillness and darkness of inner contemplation. In this darkness, celestial light appears in joyfulness and "you ride a flying phoenix" (p. 28).

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